



Neonatal Sepsis

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Neonatal sepsis refers to any serious infection in a newborn, whether in the lungs, brain or blood.

In our country, one out of every ten babies develops sepsis, and many of them die. However, if it is diagnosed and treated properly, most babies will get better and be able to grow up healthy.



Causes of Neonatal Sepsis

Mother has an infection during pregnancy or delivery.

Unclean techniques or unclean instruments used during delivery.

Unclean cutting of the umbilical cord or putting things on the cord can also lead to infection.





Baby is born preterm or has low birth weight, and is therefore weak.

Baby is exposed to cold or not breastfed early enough or exclusively, and therefore becomes weak.

Baby comes in contact with someone (mother, other family members, ASHA) who has an infection.





How can sepsis be prevented?

Good hygiene: clean instruments during delivery; frequent handwashing; clean clothes.

Keeping the baby warm during cold weather.





Early and exclusive breastfeeding.

Keeping the umbilical cord clean and dry.





What are the danger signs?

A baby must be referred immediately to the ASHA or ANM or doctor if the baby shows any of these signs:

- Limbs become limp.
- Baby stops feeding.
- Baby has chest indrawing.
- Baby is cold to the touch.
- Baby has fever.



		
Term of baby	No. of days	Dosage
Full term baby	7 days	Twice a day 
Preterm baby	10 days	



How can sepsis be managed?

Take baby to a doctor. Sepsis is best managed by doctors. They would prescribe the drug.

When delay in seeing a doctor is likely you could give Cotrimoxazole syrup twice a day – for seven days (if baby is full term) or ten days (if baby is preterm).





Take the baby to a doctor or nurse. Once the doctor or nurse confirms sepsis they will give injectable antibiotics - usually Gentamycin injection once a day.





Consult a doctor immediately if any of these danger signs are observed:

Baby does not respond even 24 hours after antibiotic treatment.

Baby becomes yellow on first day or jaundice persists after 14 days.

Baby's temperature remains below 95 degree F even after re-warming for 24 hours.





Consult a doctor immediately if any of these danger signs are observed:

If there is any bleeding from baby's nose, mouth or anus.

If the baby shows signs of tetanus – stiffness after the fourth day, unable to suckle or open mouth.

If the baby has convulsions.





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