

Risk factors for sepsis in children

- Infants under 12 months of age, and particularly those under 3 months, are more likely to have bacterial infection when they present with fever, and if they develop bacterial infection are more likely to progress to sepsis.
- Children with an impaired immune system
 - Primary immune deficiency
 - Other diseases that affect immune function e.g. congenital asplenia (or children who have undergone splenectomy), sickle cell disease. NB these children are particularly at risk of pneumococcal sepsis and should receive penicillin prophylaxis
 - Cancer patients treated with chemotherapy
 - Those on long-term oral steroids
 - Children treated with other immunosuppressive drugs for conditions such as juvenile arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease
- Those who have had surgery or other invasive procedures within the past six weeks
- Any breach of skin integrity e.g. cuts, burns, blisters, skin infections, particularly those resulting from chickenpox
- Indwelling lines or catheters