# Severe Sepsis

Severe Sepsis supports a higher risk of mortality than sepsis alone. Medicare risk adjusted mortality is based only on diagnoses that are Present on Admission (POA). Don’t undervalue your care by omitting Severe Sepsis on the H&P when the criteria are met.

The Sepsis-3 publication (JAMA, 2016) states that sepsis diagnosed using SOFA criteria is always Severe Sepsis. Never document ‘sepsis’ alone when using the SOFA criteria. Always support your patient’s risk with the word severe.

## Clinical Criteria

|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Definition of Sepsis | A life-threatening organ dysfunction (not failure) caused by a dysregulated host response to infection. | **Sepsis**: Infection, suspected or documented, with systemic manifestations of infection due to the infectious process.  
**Severe sepsis**: plus sepsis-induced organ dysfunction or tissue hypoperfusion |
| Scoring Methodology | Sequential Organ Failure Assessment Score (SOFA). Acute change of ≥ 2 SOFA points due to the infectious process – associated with in-hospital mortality > 10%. | “Some” clinical indicators of sepsis plus organ dysfunction due to the infectious process |
| CNS | GCS 13-14 = 1 point (e.g., “conversational but disoriented”)  
GCS 10-12 = 2 points | Altered mental status |
| Respiratory | PaO₂/FiO₂ < 400 = 1 point  
PaO₂/FiO₂ < 300 = 2 points | Without pneumonia:  
PaO₂/FiO₂ < 250 (86% RA)  
With pneumonia:  
PaO₂/FiO₂ < 200 (80% RA) |
| Cardiovascular | Mean arterial pressure  
MAP = [(SBP – DBP) x 0.33 + DBP]  
Use of pressors = 2 points | Sepsis-induced hypotension |
| Renal – Creatinine | > 1.2 – 1.9 mg/dL = 1 point  
2.0 – 3.4 mg/dL = 2 points | > 2.0 mg/dL |
| Renal – UOP | UOP < 500 ml/day = 3 points | UOP < 0.5 mL/kg/hr for more than 2 hrs despite adequate fluid resuscitation |
| Hepatic: Total bilirubin | 1.2 – 1.9 = 1 point  
2.0 – 5.9 = 2 points | > 2 mg/dL |
| Thrombocytopenia: | < 150,000/µL – 1 point  
< 100,000/µL – 2 points | < 100,000/µL |
| Coagulation | -- | INR > 1.5 |
| Lactate | -- | Above laboratory normal |

**Link the acute change in clinical indicators to the infectious process, “due to”**


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