

Emergency

Infection

Why look out for infection?

Because of damage to the spleen (an organ in the body that helps support the immune system) people with sickle cell disease are at an increased risk for infection. An infection is when a virus or bacteria is in the blood stream.

Tips to prevent infection:

- Stay up to date with all recommended vaccines and immunizations.
- Make sure to follow your treatment plan and take penicillin daily, as prescribed by your doctor, until at least 5 years of age.

Symptoms:

- Temperature (over 101.5°)
- Extreme crankiness
- Rapid breathing
- Uncontrollable screaming
- Lack of energy
- Poor appetite
- Decrease in the number of wet diapers

What to do:

- Call with ANY fever higher than 101.5° and come to the hospital or clinic. This is considered an emergency. There are very serious infections that can cause harm if not treated quickly.

Treatment:

- At the hospital, they will receive blood draws to test for infection and IV antibiotics.