

BROADCAST- Early detection, rapid treatment key to fighting sepsis

ANCHOR LEAD IN:

The recent death from sepsis of NASCAR legend Kyle Busch who died at 41 is serving as an important reminder – don't wait to see a doctor if you're spiking a fever and generally not feeling well. An OSF HealthCare leader working on sepsis prevention has other advice.

VO OR RADIO PACKAGE:

Sepsis remains one of the nation's leading health threats, affecting an estimated 1.7 million Americans each year and contributing to hundreds of thousands of deaths. Dr. Leon Yeh of OSF HealthCare says 85% of people with sepsis have already acquired it before showing up in hospital emergency departments. Many, like Kyle Busch, have waited too long before seeking hospital care.

Dr. Yeh says leaders have also learned that it's less important early on to figure out the cause.

SOT-DR. LEON YEH

"I think it took some time for our people to understand that you didn't need to know exactly where the sepsis was coming from before you treated it," says Dr. Yeh, vice president Hospitalist, Emergency, and Diagnostic Medicine Service Line, OSF HealthCare. "The standard now is to administer broad-spectrum antibiotics. You cast a wide net for anything that could be causing this condition, and then you sort it out later." (:18)

Hospital systems like OSF are also using predictive tools and electronic alerts to spot sepsis sooner, but experts say rapid response from care teams remains the key to saving lives.