

**BITESIZED  
TEACHING**



# Systemic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (SIRS)

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Systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS) is an inflammatory state affecting the whole body. It is the body's response to an infectious or noninfectious insult.



## Signs and Symptoms

- A rise in temperature, 38 degrees and above
- A fall in temperature, 36 degrees and below
- A rapid heartbeat of more than 90 beats a minute
- An unusually fast respiratory rate, of more than 20 times a minute



## Causes

The majority of cases of SIRS are linked to gallstones or alcohol consumption but often the cause isn't necessarily clear

- Gallstones
- Alcohol consumption
- Trauma
- Medications
- Viral infections – mumps or measles for example
- Pancreatitis (an inflammation of the pancreas- often reported as an constant acute pain in the upper abdomen that travels towards their back.)
- Pulmonary embolism (blockage of an artery in the lungs)
- Anaphylaxis (severe and dangerous allergic reaction)
- Drug overdose



## Ward Based Management

- Organise immediate medical review
- Patient will often report the pain to the nursing staff. If the patient has difficulty communicating then be mindful of body language, such as holding part of their body or displaying distressed facial expressions
- Take physical observations and gain as much background from the patient as possible