

1.2.1 Accuracy of testing for serious infection in the immunocompromised in ambulatory care (Lay summary)

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Bacterial infections can be serious if not treated promptly. Examples of illnesses caused by harmful bacterial are pneumonia, meningitis, and food poisoning.

Some people have a reduced ability to fight bacterial infections because of a failing immune system, the body's defence system that protects against disease. Patients with a failing immune system are referred to as 'immunocompromised'.

Assessing patients with serious bacterial infections is both difficult and complex. We want to find out what symptoms, signs and tests are used by clinicians to identify serious bacterial infections in immunocompromised adult patients, and how effective these methods are in predicting serious bacterial infections when compared with established diagnostic methods.

This systematic review will summarise evidence from all relevant research studies. If possible, the results will be combined by type of infection to provide an overall result. Understanding the clinical features of symptoms, signs and tests could allow for more timely and accurate diagnoses and treatment of serious bacterial infections. This could prevent the need to go to hospital and potentially be lifesaving.