

## Circulatory shock

# MANAGING DISTRIBUTIVE SHOCK

### *There are four main classes of shock*

- Hypovolemic
- **Distributive**
- Cardiogenic
- Obstructive

Distributive shock refers to inadequate perfusion due to low systemic vascular resistance. This primarily affects the diastolic pressure, which is particularly important for coronary perfusion. A low diastolic pressure may decrease cardiac output through coronary ischemia, adding a component of cardiogenic shock.

### *Causes*

The most common cause for distributive shock is sepsis. Less common causes include neurologic injury, adrenal insufficiency, and anaphylaxis. Distributive shock is intimately related to hypovolemic shock, since inadequate volume to fill the vasculature may result from either a low circulating volume, or a large intravascular space to fill.

### *Treatment*

Treatment for distributive shock should focus on increasing vascular tone, when possible (e.g., vasopressor administration). Often, lower rates of vasopressor infusion can be tolerated through peripheral IVs or intraosseous lines, especially when used temporarily.

Intravascular volume replacement (e.g., IV fluids) is helpful in most cases, due to concomitant hypovolemia, but care should be taken to avoid excessive fluid administration.

