



# 2020 Sepsis Alliance Annual Survey





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# Methodology

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*Sepsis.org*



The survey was conducted online within the United States by Radius Global Market Research on behalf of Sepsis Alliance on June 2-3, 2020, among more than 2,000 adults living in the U.S. The results were weighted to the U.S. census for age, gender, region and income. Surveys were conducted in English.

### **About Radius Global Market Research**

Radius Global Market Research ([www.radius-global.com](http://www.radius-global.com)) is one of the largest independent market-research companies. For more than 50 years, the business has partnered with global marketers to develop insight-based strategies that drive brand performance. A superior level of senior team involvement is the hallmark of Radius GMR's approach. Radius GMR is based in New York. Global operations include London-based Radius Europe, Radius MEA in Dubai, and Radius Asia in Beijing.



# Background on Sepsis

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*[Sepsis.org](https://sepsis.org)*

## Sepsis is a common and deadly complication of COVID-19.<sup>1,2</sup>

### *What is sepsis?*

Sepsis is the body's life-threatening response to an infection that affects 1.7 million people and takes approximately 270,000 lives every year in the United States alone.<sup>3</sup>

- Sepsis is the #1 cause of death in hospitals.<sup>4</sup>
- Sepsis is the #1 cost of hospitalization in the U.S. consuming more than \$53 billion each year.<sup>5,6</sup>
- Sepsis is the #1 cause for readmissions to the hospital costing more than \$3.5 billion each year.<sup>7</sup>
- As many as 87% of all sepsis cases originate in the community.<sup>3</sup>
- Mortality rates are high. Mortality from sepsis increases as much as 8% for every hour that treatment is delayed.<sup>8,9</sup> As many as 80% of sepsis deaths could be prevented with rapid diagnosis and treatment.<sup>8</sup>
- Sepsis affects over 49 million people worldwide each year and is the largest killer of children – nearly 3.4 million each year.<sup>10,11</sup>
- More than 1.7 million people in the U.S. are diagnosed with sepsis each year – 1 every 20 seconds.<sup>3</sup>
- Every day, there is an average of 38 amputations in the U.S. as the result of sepsis.<sup>12</sup>



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# Executive Summary

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The 2020 Sepsis Alliance Annual Survey revealed both positive and troubling findings on the state of sepsis awareness in the United States. Awareness of the term sepsis reached an all-time high of 71%, a significant increase over last year's awareness level of 65%. However, awareness levels of the term vary significantly among racial and ethnic groups, with people who identify as Black reporting the lowest awareness levels (49%). Awareness of the signs and symptoms of sepsis is low at 15% and is particularly low among people who identify as Black (5%).

Sepsis is the most common complication observed in severe cases of COVID-19,<sup>1,2</sup> yet only about one-third of adults are aware that it is a possible complication. This, coupled with lower sepsis awareness levels among people who identify as Black and Hispanic, is especially concerning because these communities have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.<sup>13</sup>



The survey also found that one-third of adults know at least one person who had sepsis, including themselves. Many of those who reported having sepsis also reported experiencing mental, physical, or emotional challenges. In addition, the survey found that higher sepsis awareness levels were correlated with higher income levels.

Despite overall gains in sepsis awareness, the survey highlights the need for increased education across all racial and ethnic groups on the signs and symptoms of sepsis, and a critical need for increased sepsis awareness in communities of color, which have been hit hardest by COVID-19.<sup>13</sup>

# Key Findings



- 71% of respondents are aware of the term sepsis. This is a six percent increase from 2019 (65%), and a 31% increase from 2012 when Sepsis Alliance first conducted the survey online.
- Only one-third (34%) of adults are aware that sepsis is a potential complication of COVID-19. Fewer than one-third (29%) of adults know that sepsis is a potential complication of the flu.
- Only 49% of people who identify as Black are aware of the term sepsis, while 63% of people who identify as Hispanic are aware of the term, and 76% of people who identify as white are aware of the term.
- Only 15% of adults can identify the four common signs and symptoms of sepsis, and one-quarter do not know any of the symptoms.
- Only 5% of people who identified as Black can identify the four common symptoms of sepsis. Of people who identify as white, 18% can identify these four symptoms.
- 79% of people who make an annual income of \$75,000 or more are aware of the term, whereas only 64% of people who make \$50,000 or less are aware of the term.
- 35% of people know at least one person who has had sepsis, including themselves. Of those who have had sepsis, 30% report facing mental health challenges



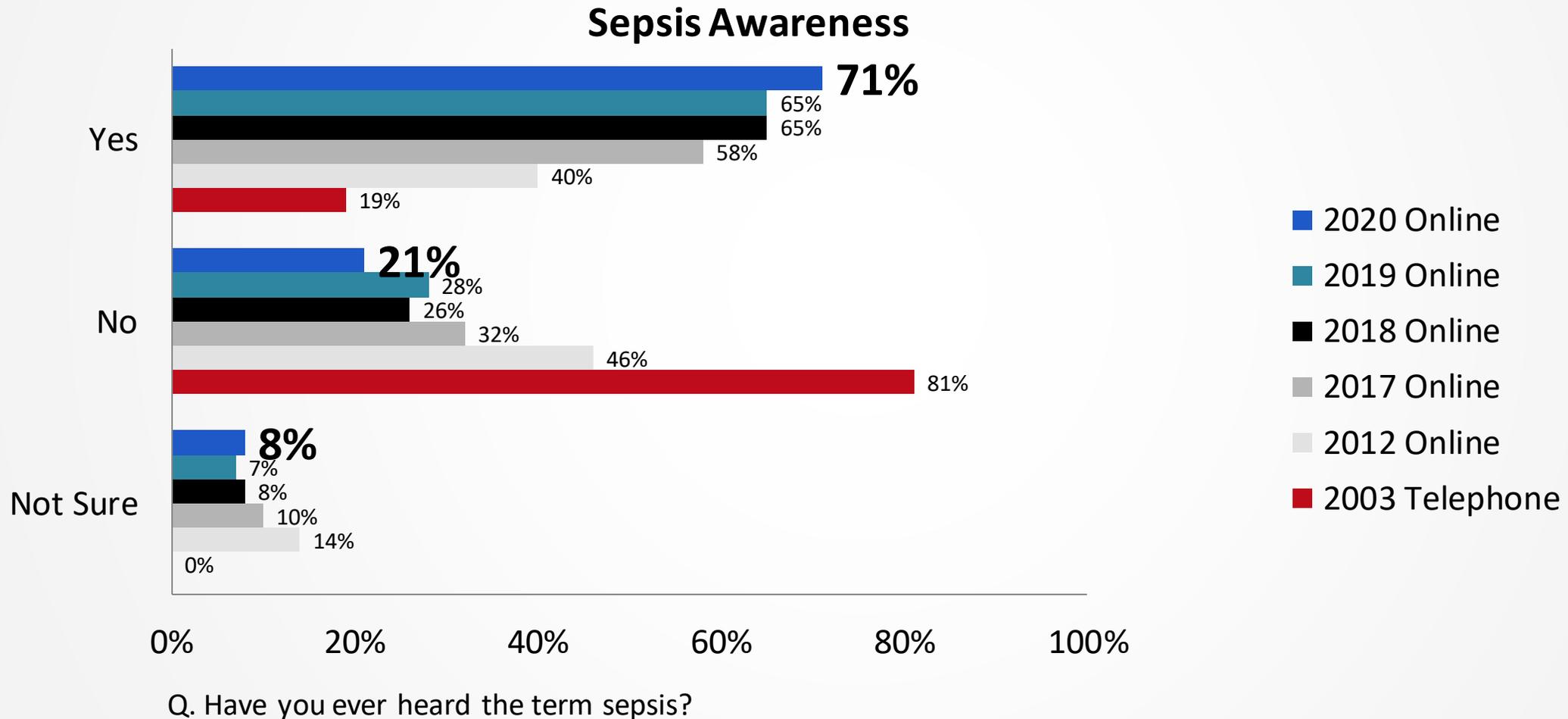
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# Study Details

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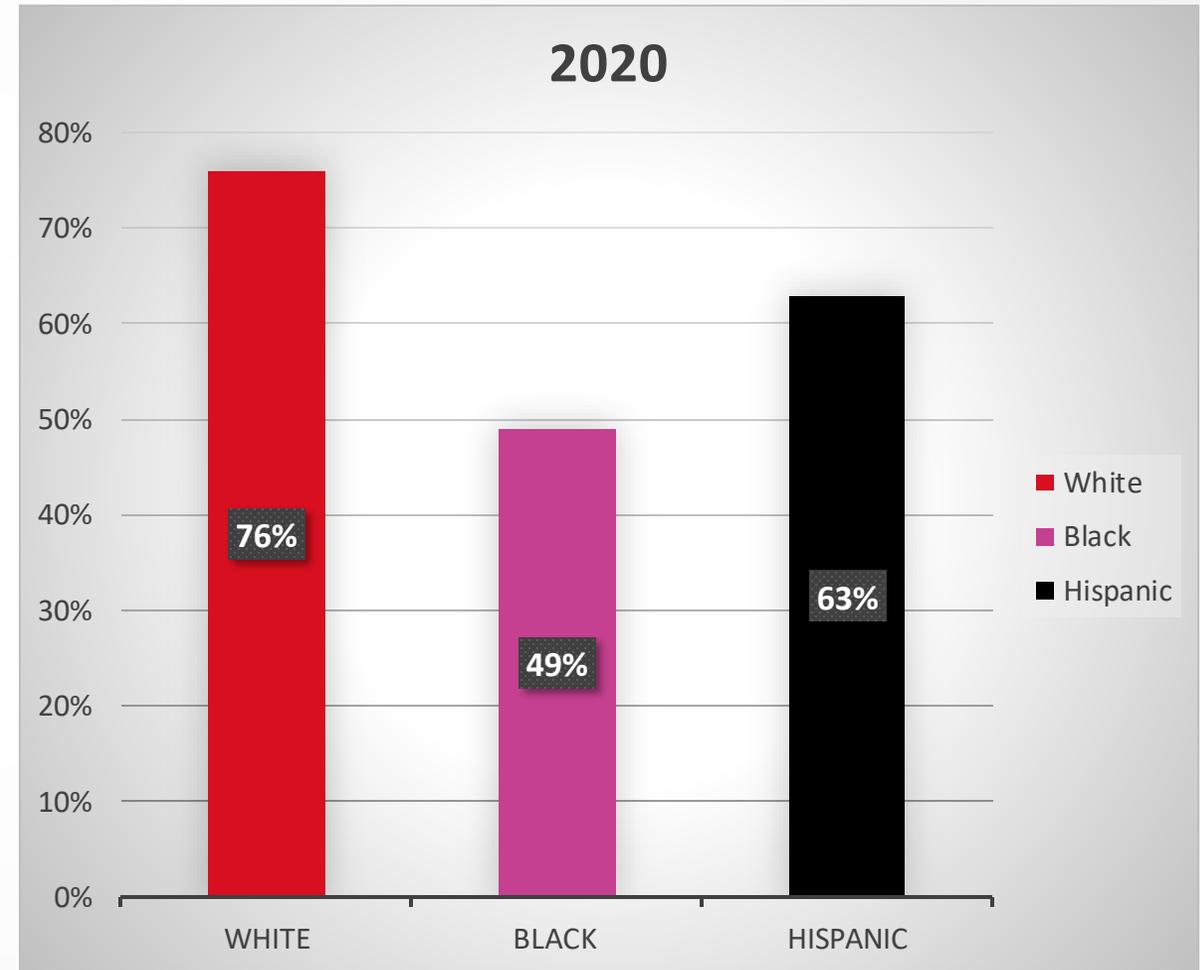
*Sepsis.org*

# Awareness levels of the term sepsis increased significantly in 2020.



\* CANNOT TREND THE DATA FROM ONE METHODOLOGY TO ANOTHER. MAY NOT BE EQUAL TO 100% DUE TO ROUNDING.

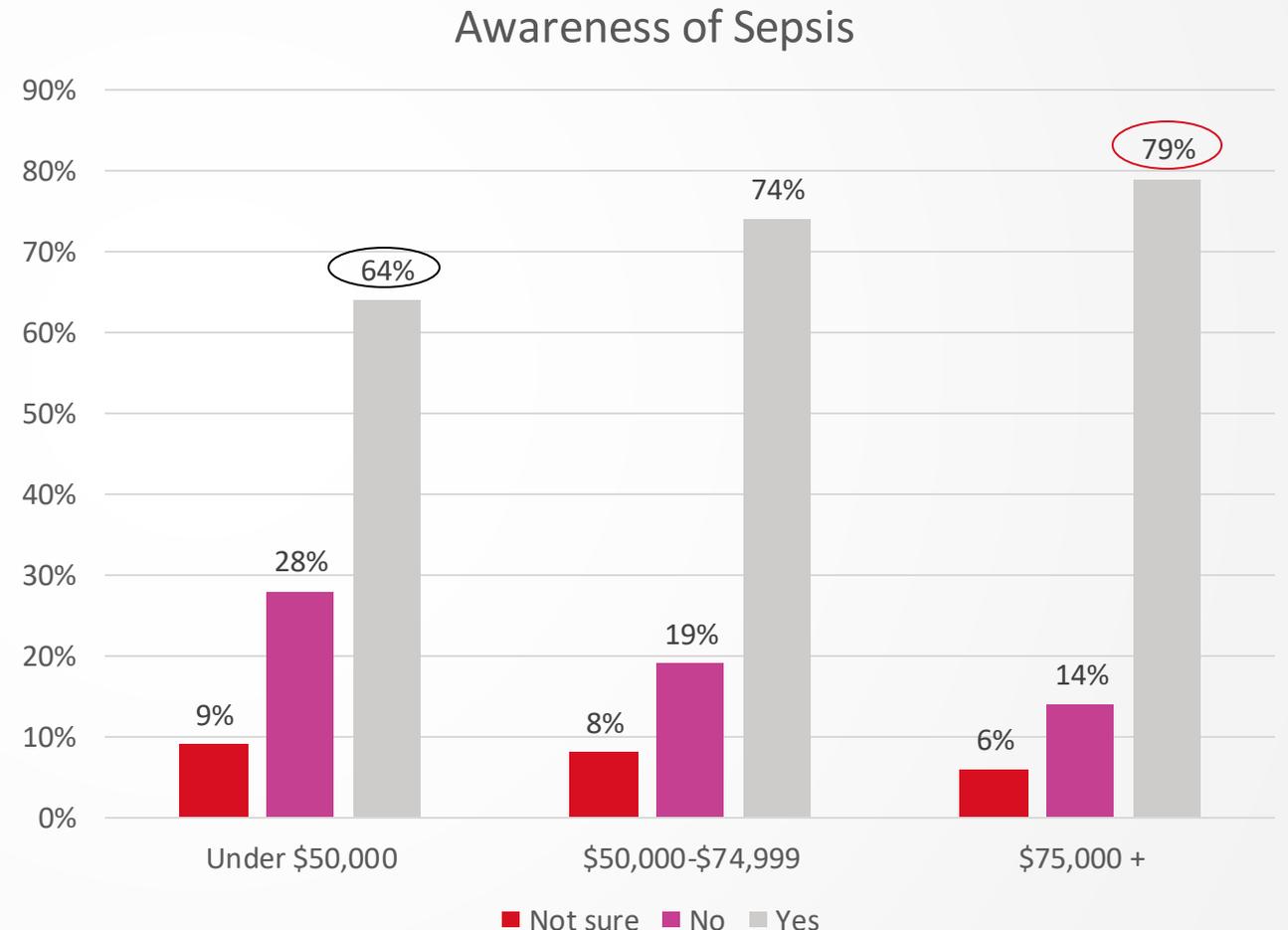
Those who identify as white are significantly more likely to have heard the term sepsis than those who identify as Black.



Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

People with higher incomes have a significantly higher awareness of the term sepsis than those with lower incomes.

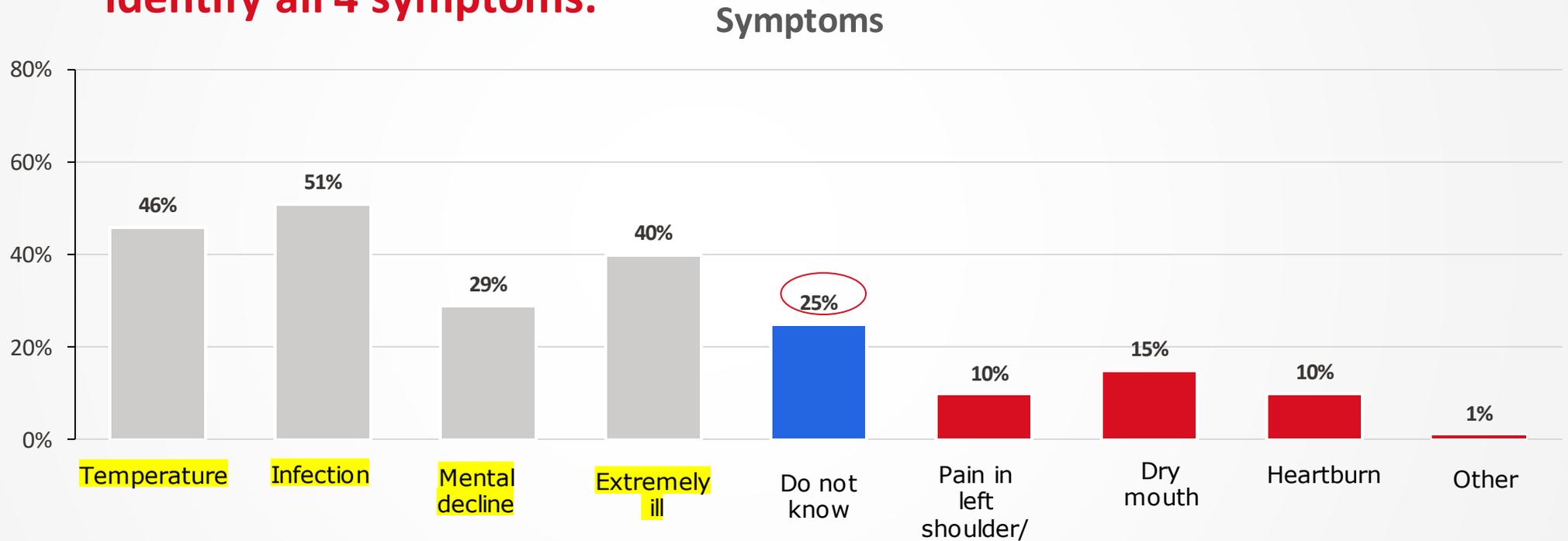
Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?



# One-quarter of adults do not know the symptoms of sepsis.



Only 15% were able to identify all 4 symptoms.



✓ Yellow highlights sepsis symptoms

Q. Which of the following, if any, are the symptoms of sepsis?



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Notable disparities revealed between racial and ethnic groups.

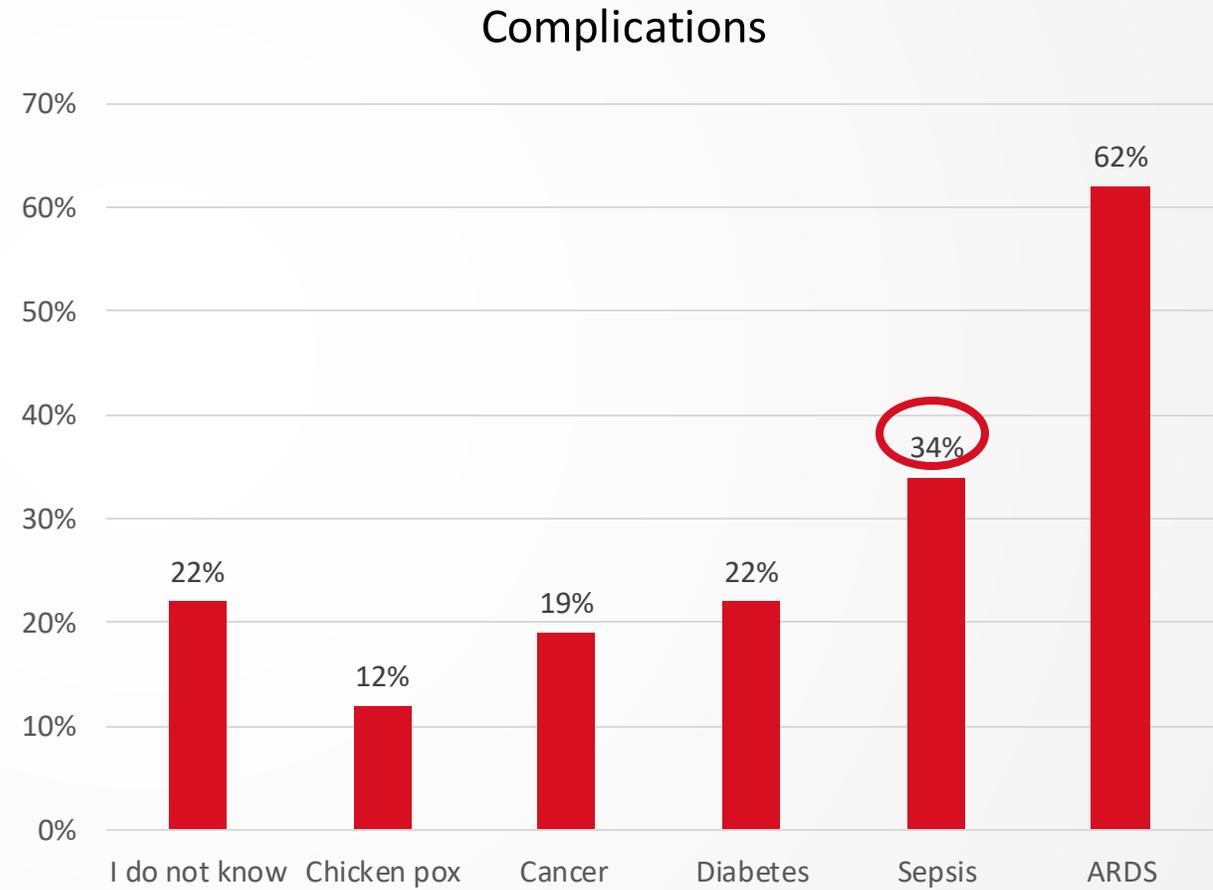
	Overall	Black	Hispanic	White
Are aware of the term sepsis	71%	<b>49%*</b>	63%	<b>76%*</b>
Do not know symptoms of sepsis	25%	26%	37%	23%
Able to identify all four of the common symptoms of sepsis	15%	5%	14%	18%
Know of someone who had sepsis or had it themselves	35%	<b>26%*</b>	38%	<b>37%*</b>

# Complications of COVID-19



Only 34% are aware that sepsis is a complication of COVID-19.

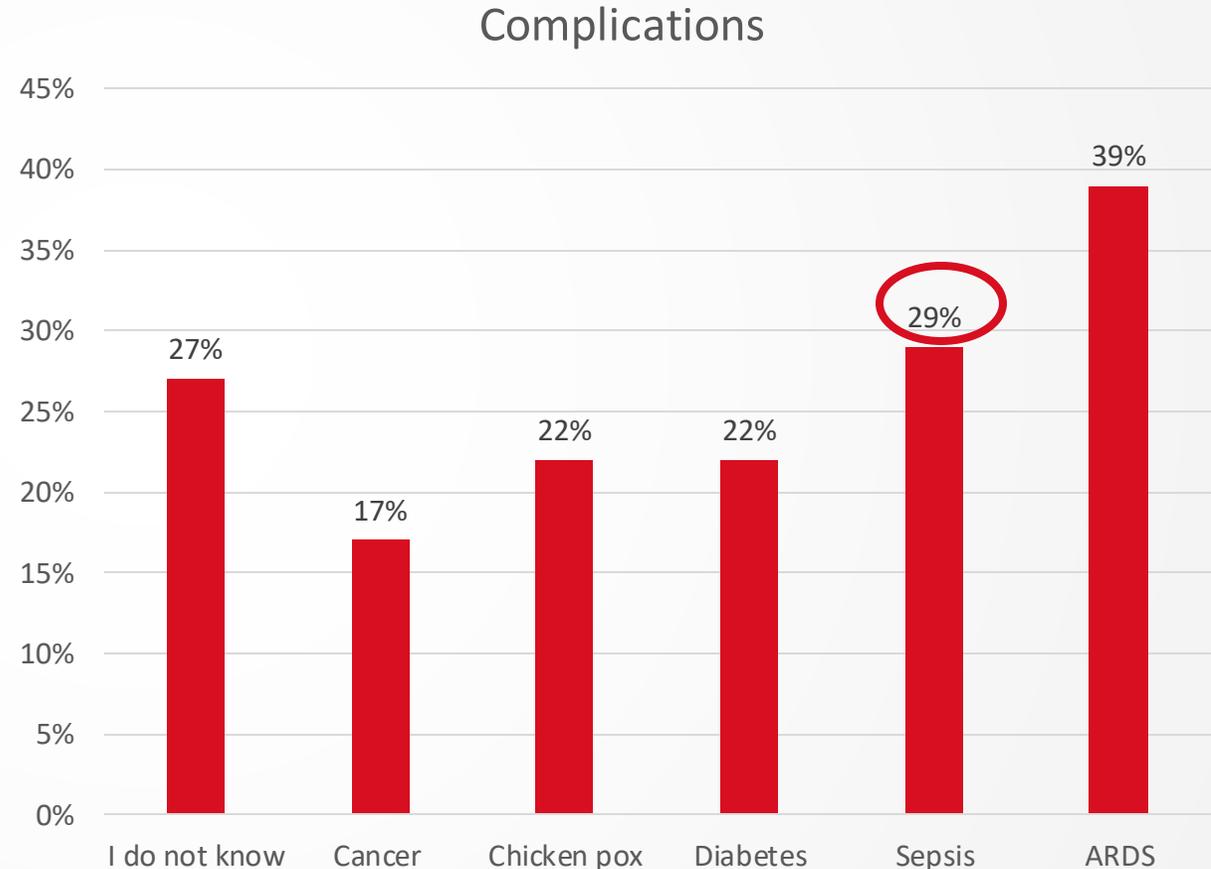
Q. Which of the following conditions, if any, do you think are complications of COVID-19?

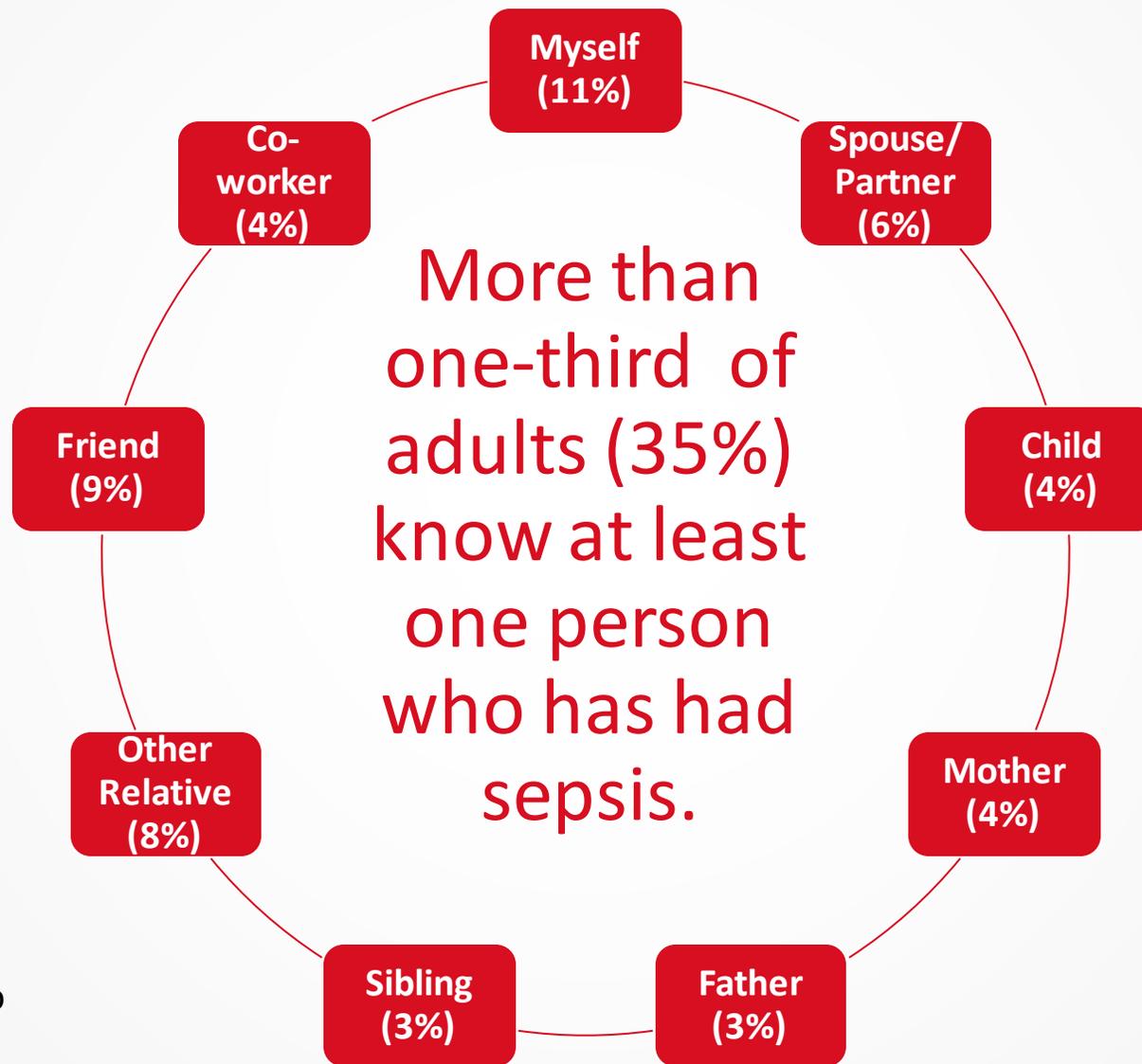


# Complications of Seasonal Flu

Most adults are unaware that sepsis is a complication of seasonal flu.

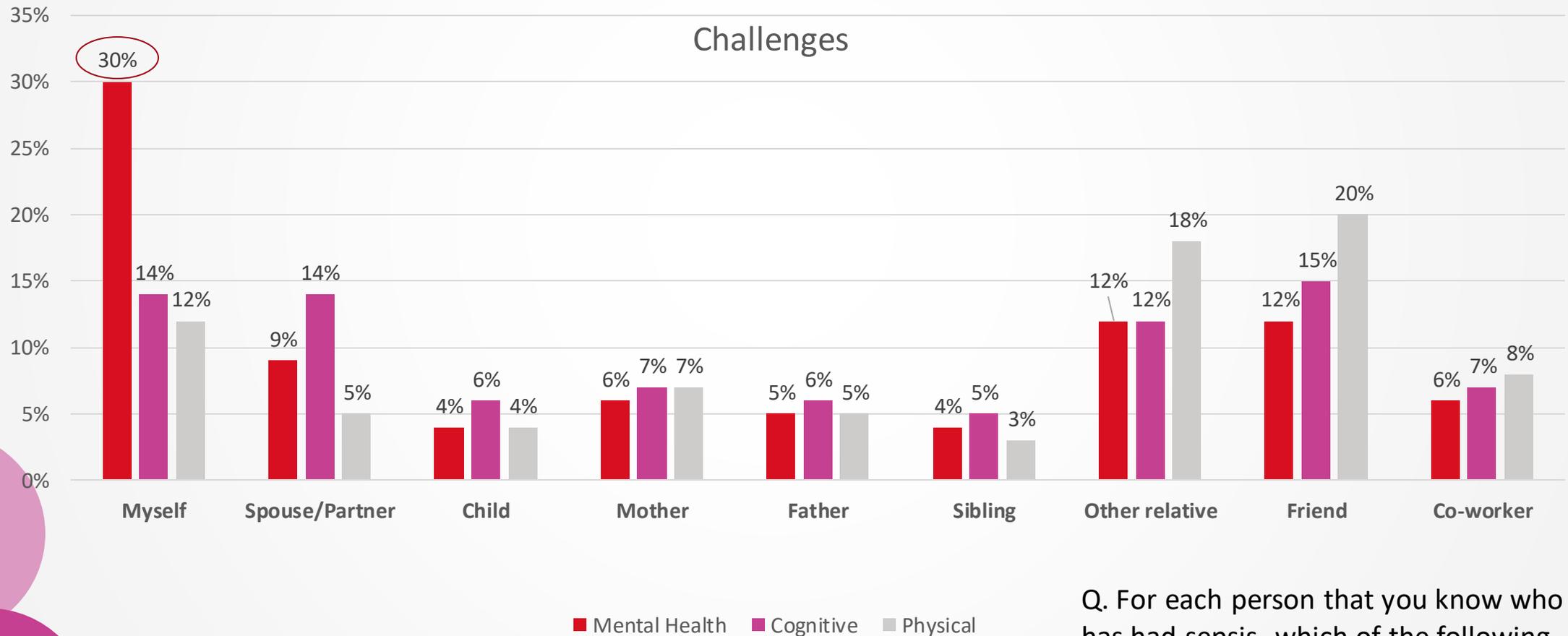
Q. Which of the following conditions, if any, do you think are complications of the flu?





Q. Do you know anyone who has had sepsis?

# Many sepsis survivors face mental health, cognitive, and physical challenges.



Q. For each person that you know who has had sepsis, which of the following challenges have they faced?

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