



SEPSIS
ALLIANCE

2022 Sepsis Awareness Survey

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



SEPSIS
ALLIANCE

Methodology

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



The survey was conducted online within the United States by YouGov Plc. on behalf of Sepsis Alliance July 3-5th, 2022, among 2,451 adults living in the U.S.

The results were weighted to the U.S. census for age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, and income. Surveys were conducted in English.



Sepsis Background

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

Sepsis is a common and deadly complication of COVID-19.^{1,2}

What is sepsis?

Sepsis is the body's life-threatening response to an infection that affects 1.7 million people and takes approximately 350,000 adult lives every year in the United States alone.³

- Sepsis is the #1 cause of death in hospitals.⁴
- Sepsis is the #1 cost of hospitalization in the U.S. consuming more than \$53 billion in in-hospital costs each year.^{5,6}
- As many as 87% of all sepsis cases originate in the community.³
- Mortality rates are high. The risk of mortality from sepsis increases by 4-9% for every hour that treatment is delayed.^{7,8,9}
- Sepsis affects over 49 million people worldwide each year and is the largest killer of children – nearly 3.4 million each year.^{10,11}
- Black and "other nonwhite" individuals have nearly twice the incidence of sepsis as whites (1.89 times the risk for Blacks, and 1.9 times the risk for "other nonwhite" individuals).¹³
- Black patients admitted to the emergency room are assigned to significantly lower priority status and experience significantly longer wait times (10.9 minutes longer on average) as compared to case-matched white patients.¹⁴
- Every day, there is an average of 38 amputations in the U.S. as the result of sepsis.¹²



SEPSIS
ALLIANCE

Executive Summary

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

Executive Summary



The 2022 Sepsis Alliance annual sepsis awareness survey showed awareness of the term “sepsis” rose one percentage point to 66%, with Hispanic adults showing the lowest awareness of the term and white adults the highest. The awareness level is mildly higher than the pre-pandemic awareness level reported in 2018 and 2019 of 65%. We saw a spike in awareness in 2020 to 71%, likely due to the extreme interest in medical information at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sepsis is the body’s overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection, which affects an estimated 49 million people worldwide each year.

Executive Summary, Continued



Sepsis Alliance has become increasingly aware of disparities in healthcare based on socioeconomic status, race, and other factors and has made an organization-wide commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) work. The survey found that those who identify as white are significantly more likely to be aware of the term “sepsis” (76%) than those who identify as Black (45%) and those who identify as Hispanic (40%), though Black and “other nonwhite” individuals have nearly twice the incidence of sepsis as white individuals.

Additionally, of those aware of the word sepsis, only 19% were able to correctly identify all four common symptoms of sepsis. The disparities also remain among those who have heard the term “sepsis” and could correctly identify all four common symptoms of sepsis.

Key Findings



- Overall awareness of the term sepsis is at 66% of US adults in 2022.
- Those who identify as white (76%) are significantly more likely to have heard the term sepsis than those who identify as Black (45%) and Hispanic (40%).
- Women are more likely to have heard the term sepsis than men (72% vs. 59%).
- Those with lower incomes and less education are more likely to have not heard the term sepsis.
- Among U.S. adults who were aware of the term “sepsis”, only 19% were able to correctly identify all four common symptoms of sepsis, with those that are white more likely to select these than those who identify as Black or Hispanic (21% vs. 7% vs. 11%).
- While those with a college education or further schooling have a significantly higher awareness of the term sepsis than those with a high school education or lower, there remains a significant difference among race/ethnicity between white, Black, and Hispanic (83% vs. 56% and 55%).

Demographics of the Survey*



- **Gender:**

- Male: 47%
- Female: 51%
- Nonbinary: 2%
- Other: 1%

- **Age:**

- 18 – 34 years old: 29%
- 35 – 54 years old: 30%
- 55+ years old: 41%

*All demographic information is self-reported. Due to rounding, numbers presented may not add up precisely to the totals provided.

Demographics of the Survey*



- **Race/Ethnicity:**

- White: 63%
- Black: 12%
- Hispanic: 16%
- Asian: 2%
- Other: 7%

- **Region:**

- Northeast: 18%
- Midwest: 21%
- South: 38%
- West: 24%

*All demographic information is self-reported. Due to rounding, numbers presented may not add up precisely to the totals provided.

Demographics of the Survey*



- **Annual Household Income:**

- Under \$40K: 36%
- \$40 - 79.9K: 28%
- \$80K+: 24%
- Prefer not to say: 13%

- **Education Level:**

- No HS or HS graduate: 40%
- Some college: 31%
- 4-year college graduate: 18%
- Post-graduate: 11%

*All demographic information is self-reported. Due to rounding, numbers presented may not add up precisely to the totals provided.



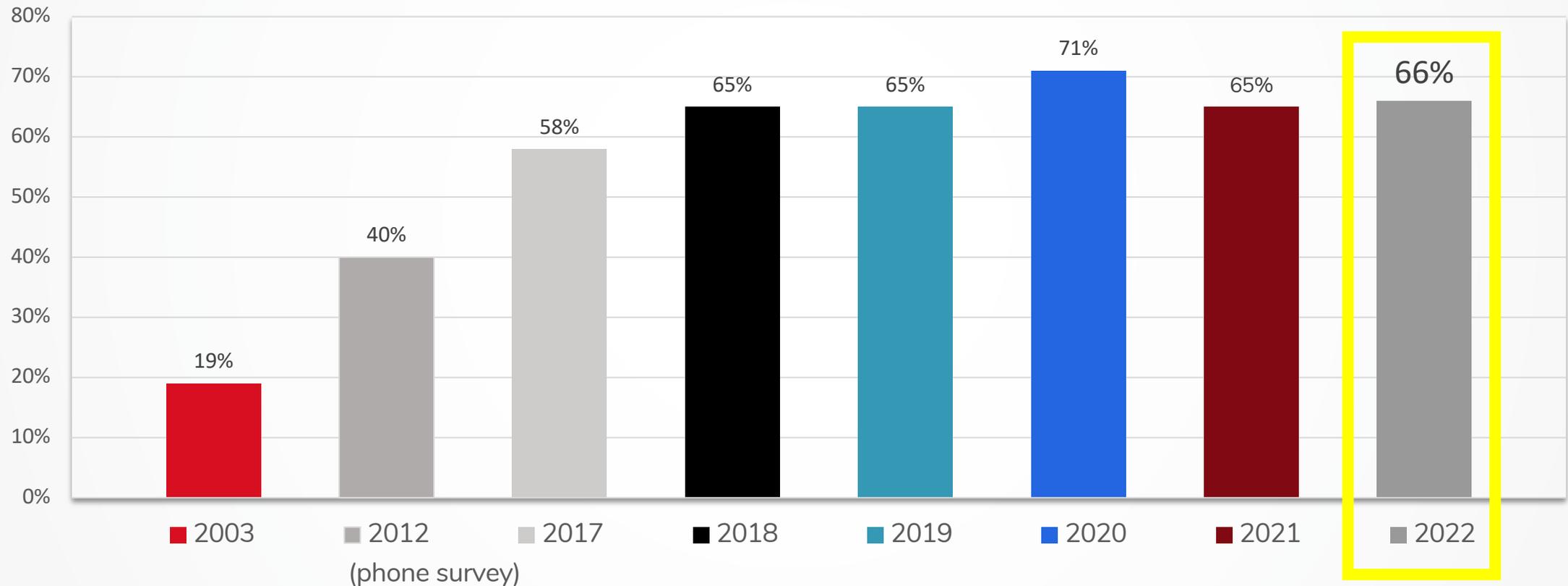
Study Details

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

About 1/3 of U.S. adults are not aware of the term "sepsis."

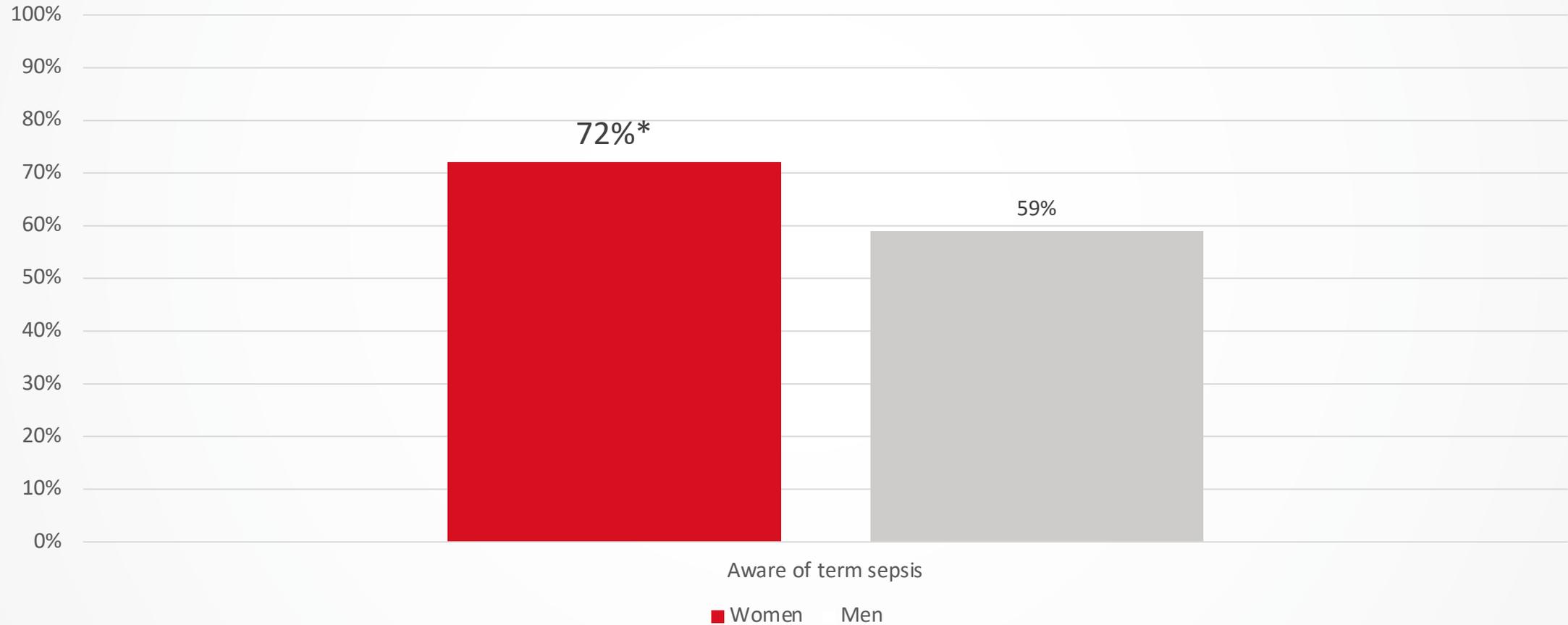


Aware of the term sepsis



Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

Those who identify as women are more likely than those who identify as men to know the term sepsis.



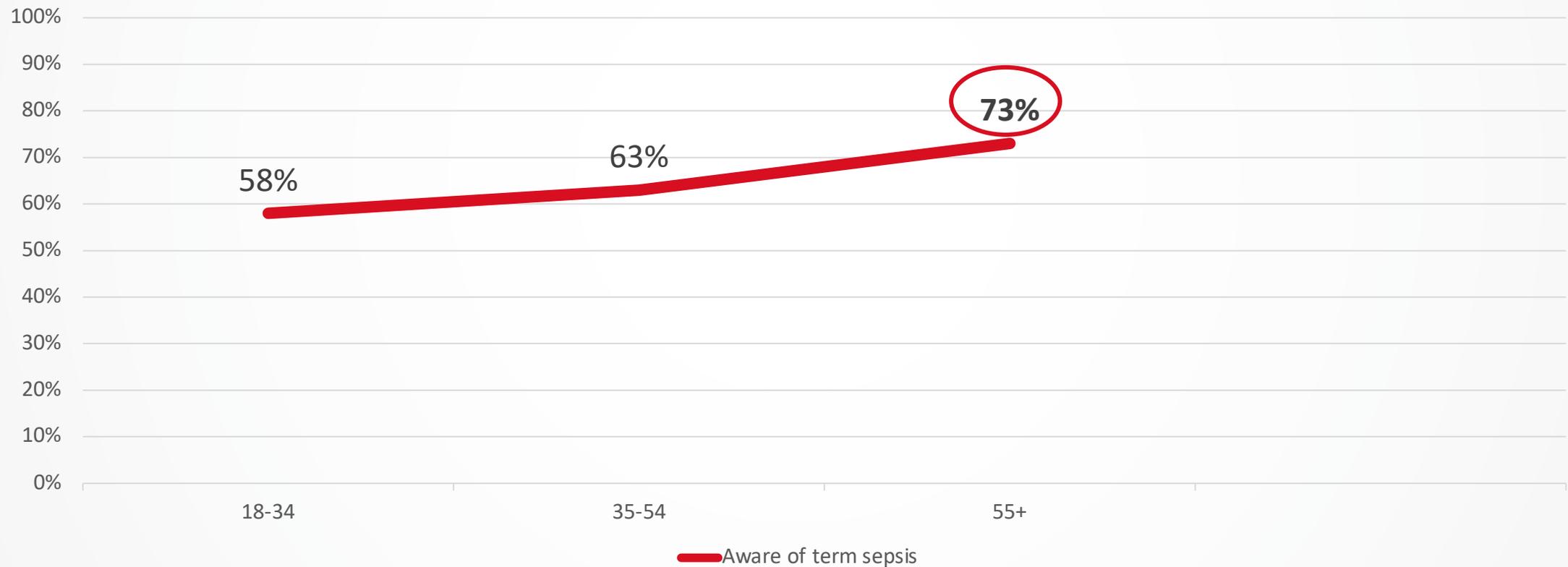
*= significantly higher than men

Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

Those 55 and older are significantly more likely to have heard the term sepsis than those that are younger.



Aware of term sepsis

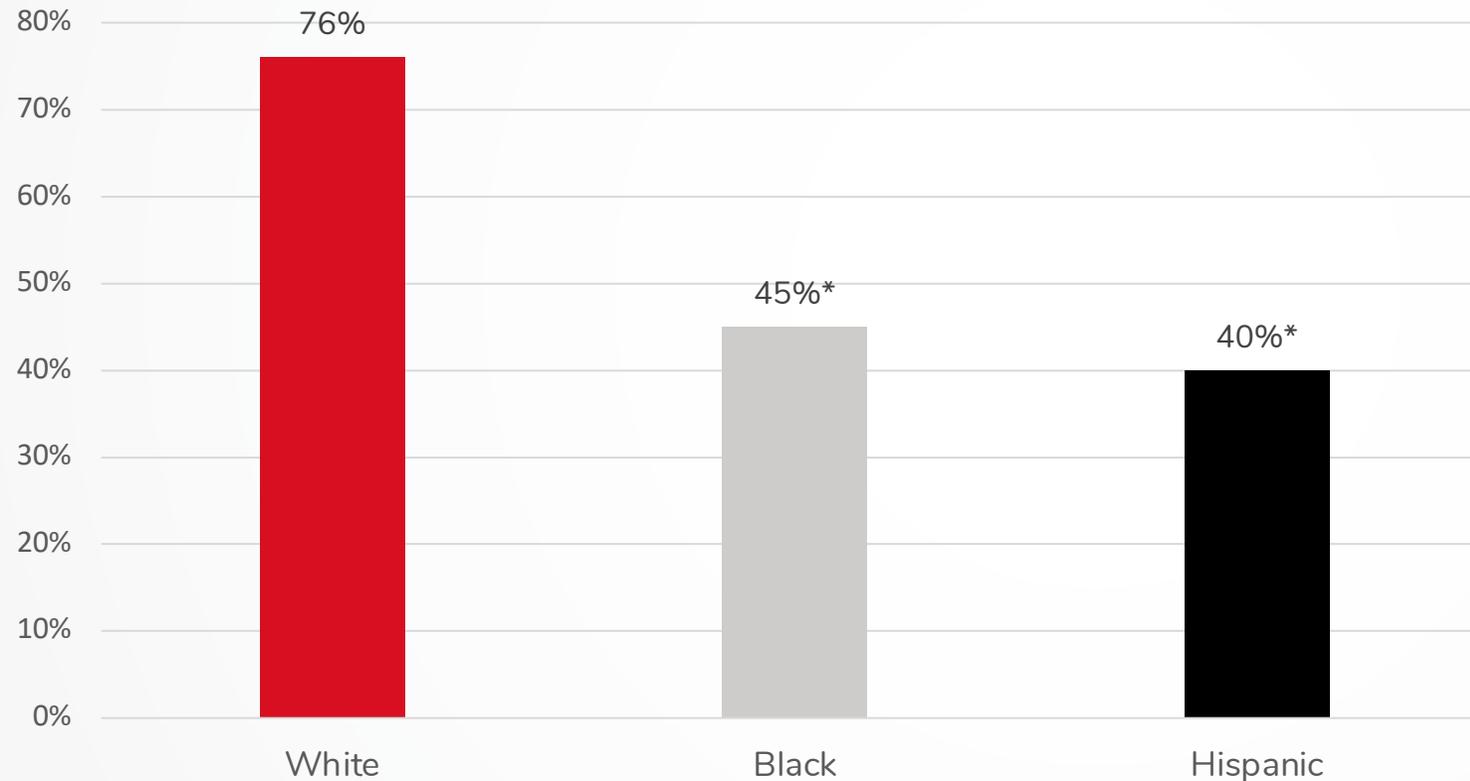


Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

Awareness of the term sepsis differs by race and ethnicity.



Aware of the term sepsis



Those who identify as Black or Hispanic are significantly less likely to have heard the term “sepsis” than those who identify as white.

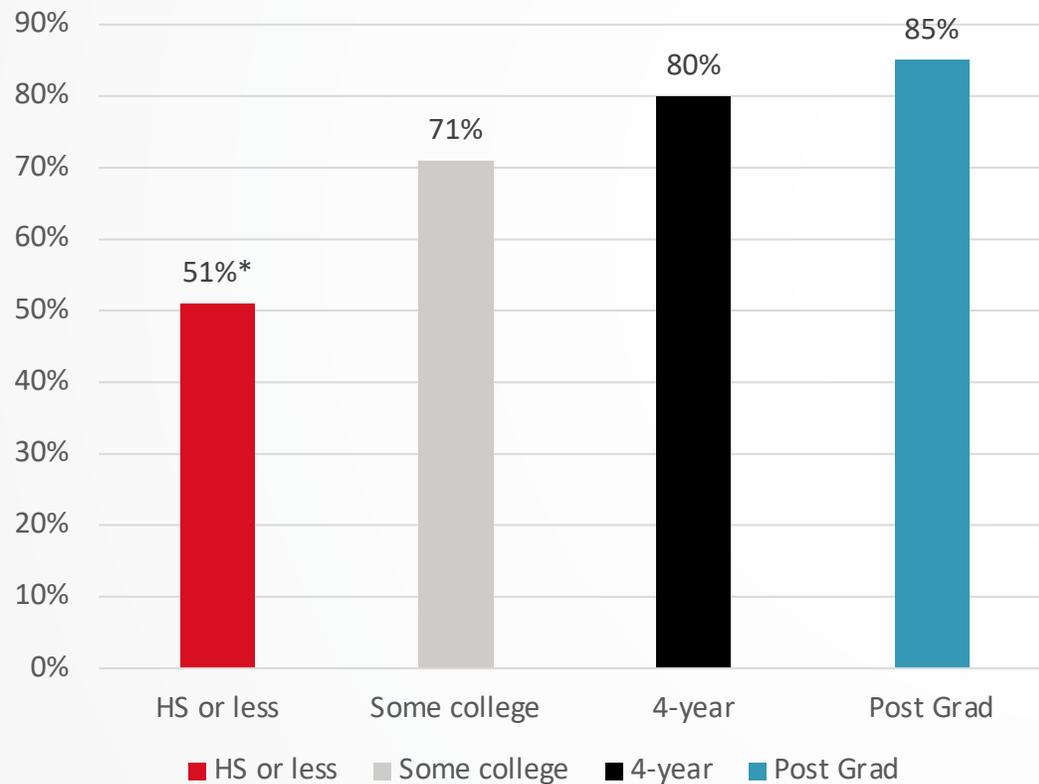
*= significantly lower than White

Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

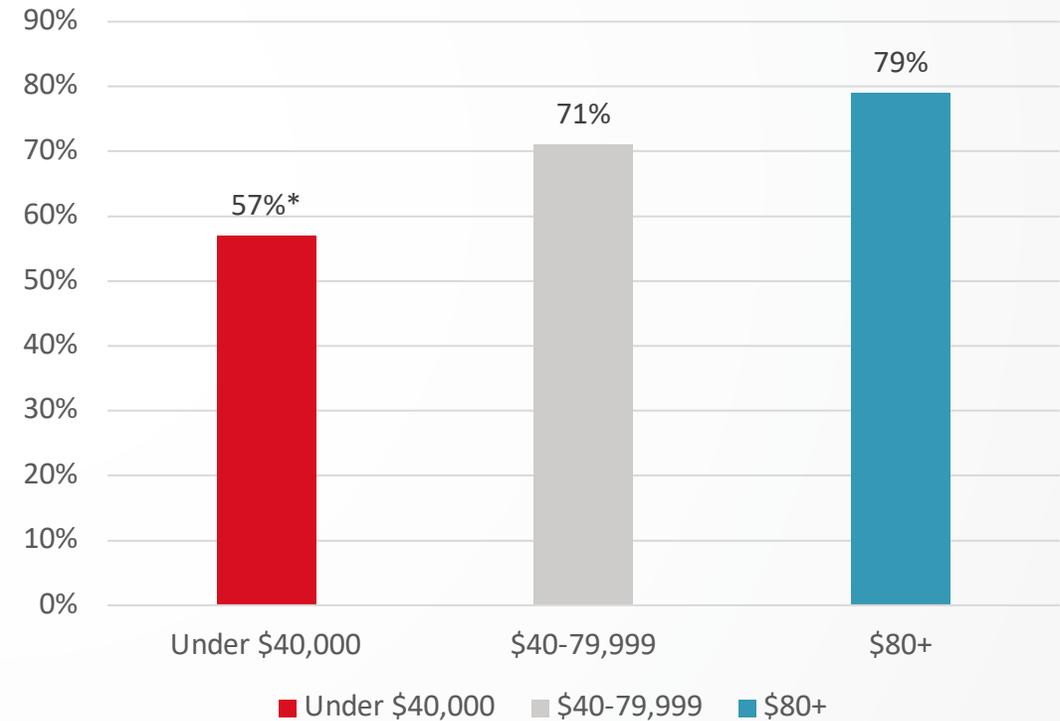
Those with less education and lower household income are less aware of the term sepsis.



Aware of the Term Sepsis: Education



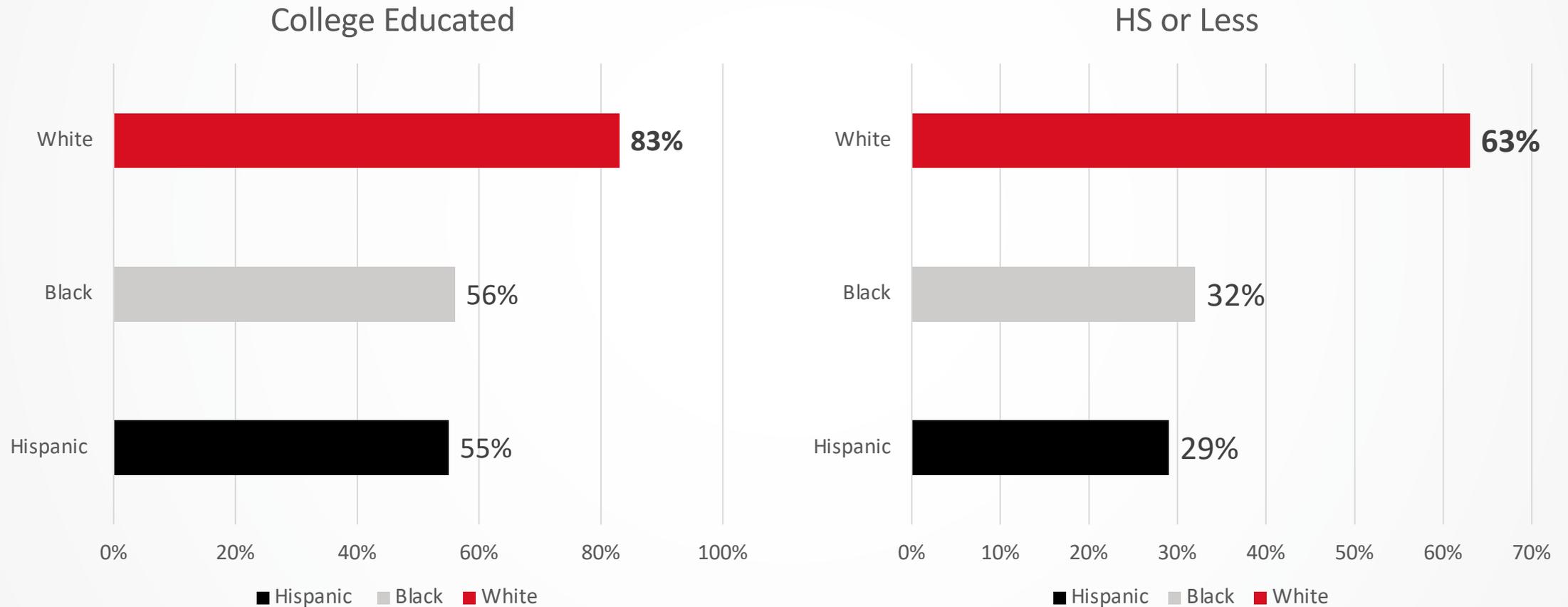
Aware of the Term Sepsis: Annual Household Income



*= significantly lower than the other options

Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

Significant race/ethnicity disparities exist within those of the same education level.

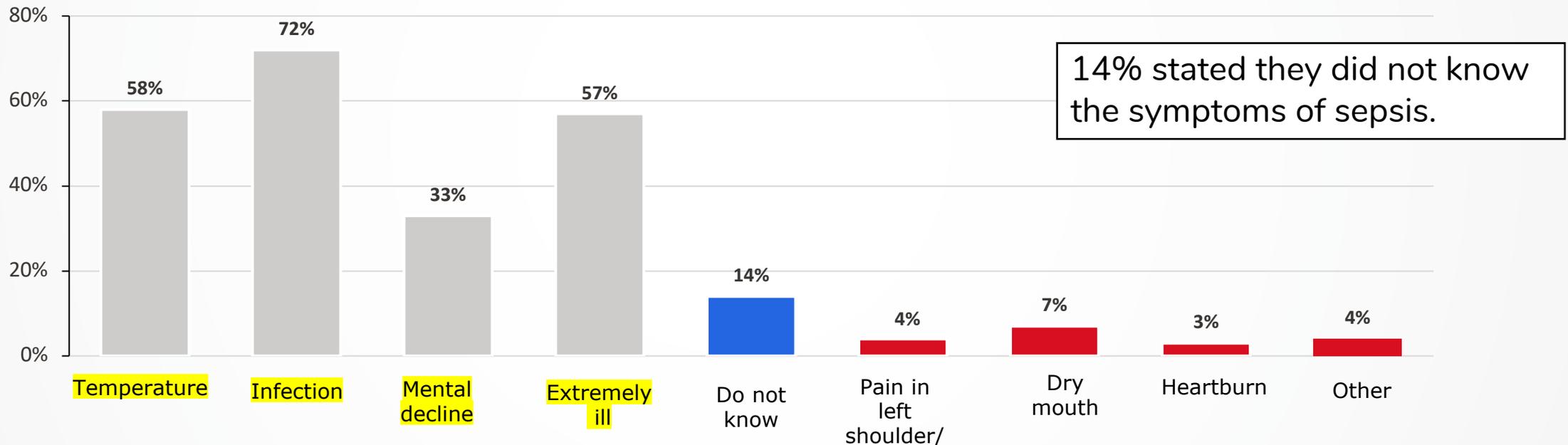


Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

Among those that recognized the term sepsis, only 19% were able to correctly identify all four common symptoms of sepsis.



Symptoms



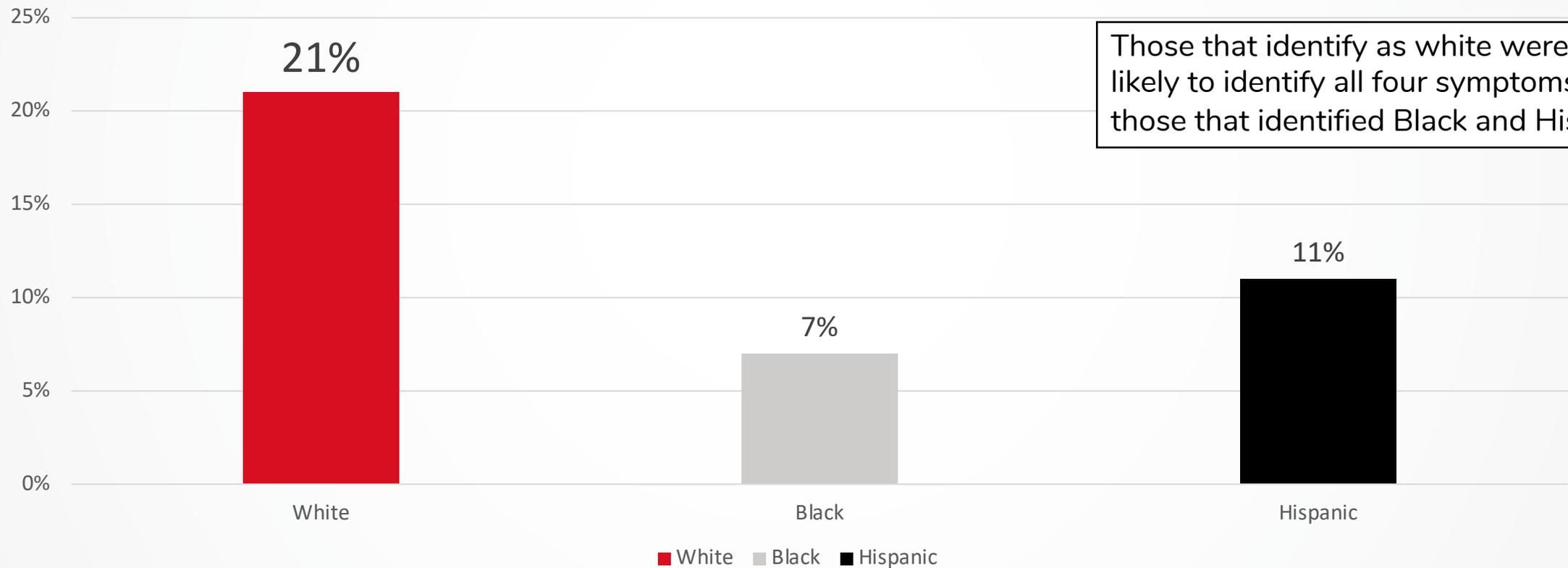
Note: Yellow highlights indicate sepsis symptoms.

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

The race/ethnicity disparity remains among those who have heard the term sepsis and correctly identified all four common symptoms of sepsis.



Correctly identified all four common symptoms of sepsis



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

References



1. Zhou F, et al. Lancet. 2020; 395 (10229), 1054-1062. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30566-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30566-3/fulltext)
2. Chen T, et al. BMJ. 2020; 368:m1091. <https://www.bmj.com/content/368/bmj.m1091>
3. Rhee C, et al. JAMA. 2017;318(13):1241-1249. <http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2654187>
4. Liu V, et al. JAMA. 2014;312(1):90-92. <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1873131&resultClick=3>
5. Torio C, Moore B. HCUP Statistical Brief #204. May 2016. <https://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb204-Most-Expensive-Hospital-Conditions.pdf>
6. Buchman TG, Simpson SQ, Sciarretta KL, et al. Crit Care Med. 2020;48(3):302-318. https://journals.lww.com/ccmjournal/FullText/2020/03000/Sepsis_Among_Medicare_Beneficiaries_3_The.4.aspx
7. Liu VX, et al. Am J Respir Crit Care Med. 2017;196(7):856-863. <https://www.atsjournals.org/doi/full/10.1164/rccm.201609-1848OC>
8. Kumar A, et al. Crit Care Med. 2006;34(6):1589-1596. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16625125/>
9. Seymour CW, et al. N Engl J Med. 2017;376(23):2235-2244. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1703058>
10. Rudd KE, et al. Lancet. 2020;395(10219):200-211 [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)32989-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)32989-7/fulltext)
11. Kisson N, and Carapetis J. J Infect. 2015;71 Suppl 1:S21-26. [https://www.journalofinfection.com/article/S0163-4453\(15\)00109-7/fulltext](https://www.journalofinfection.com/article/S0163-4453(15)00109-7/fulltext)
12. Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project, Nationwide Inpatient Sample, 2012. Accessed April 6, 2016
13. Martin, G. S., Mannino, D. M., Eaton, S. and Moss, M. (2003) The epidemiology of sepsis in the United States from 1979 through 2000, New England Journal of Medicine, 348(16), 1546-1554.
14. Schrader, C. D. and Lewis, L. M. (2013) Racial disparity in emergency department triage, J Emerg Med, 44(2), 511-518.



SEPSIS
ALLIANCE

Sepsis.org