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2023 Sepsis Awareness Survey

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Methodology

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The survey was conducted online within the United States by YouGov Plc. on behalf of Sepsis Alliance June 3-5rd, 2023, among 2,512 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

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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 Black individuals, 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



Executive Summary

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Executive Summary



The 2023 Sepsis Alliance annual sepsis awareness survey showed awareness of the term “sepsis” fell three percentage points to 63%, with Black adults showing the lowest awareness of the term and white adults the highest. 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. Awareness then dropped to 65% in 2021, 66% in 2022, and now 63% in 2023.

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 diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work. The survey found that those who identify as white are significantly more likely to be aware of the term “sepsis” (73%) than those who identify as Black (40%) and those who identify as Hispanic (41%), 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 15% were able to correctly identify all four common symptoms of sepsis, down 4% from 2022. 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 63% of US adults in 2023.
- Those who identify as white (73%) are significantly more likely to have heard the term sepsis than those who identify as Black (40%) and Hispanic (41%).
- Women are more likely to have heard the term sepsis than men (67% vs. 58%).
- Those with lower incomes and less education are less likely to have heard the term "sepsis."
- Among U.S. adults who were aware of the term "sepsis", only 15% 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 (26% vs. 16% 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 (80% vs. 51% and 52%).
- Among those that have heard the term sepsis, they first heard the term sepsis from media/news, they know someone or they had sepsis, and medical professionals (28% vs. 28% vs. 17%)

Demographics of the Survey*



- **Gender:**

- Male: 48%
- Female: 51%
- Nonbinary: <1%
- Other: <1%

- **Age:**

- 18 – 34 years old: 30%
- 35 – 54 years old: 29%
- 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: 65%
- Black: 12%
- Hispanic: 16%
- 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: 34%
- \$40 - 79.9K: 27%
- \$80K+: 26%
- 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.



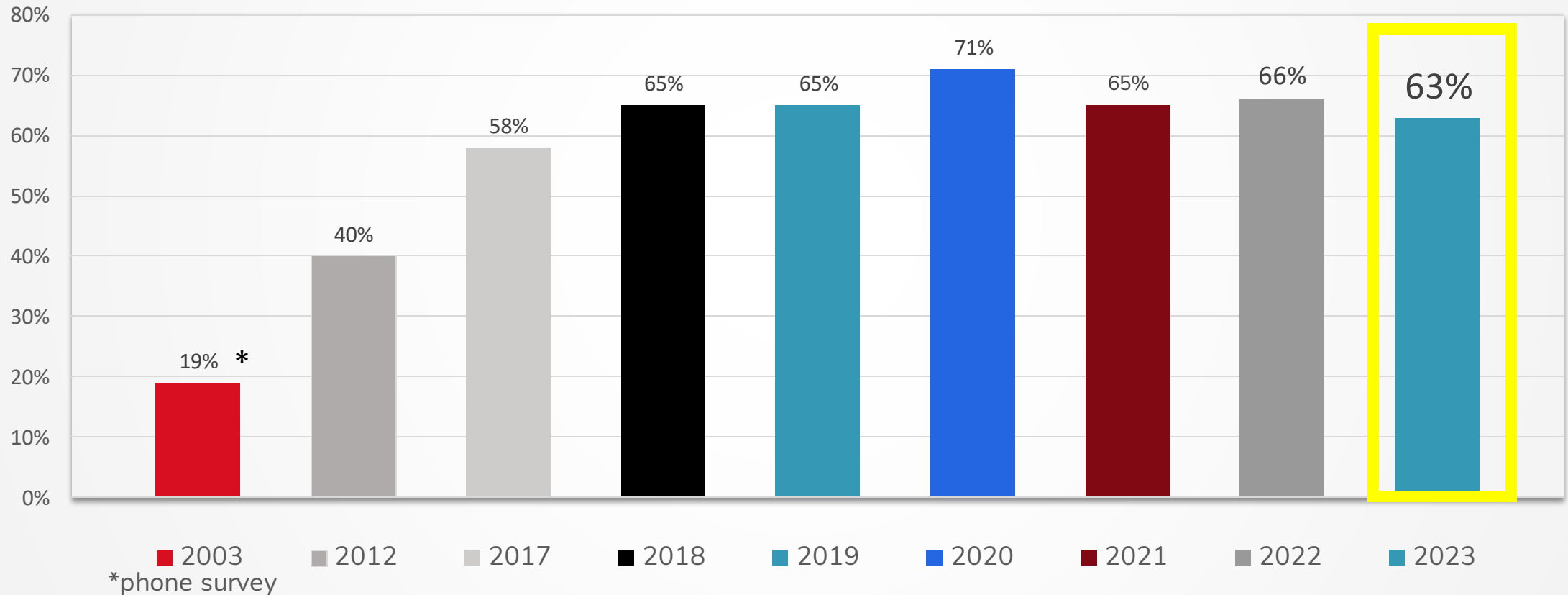
Study Details

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More than 1/3 of U.S. adults are not aware of the term "sepsis," a leading cause of death.



Aware of the term sepsis

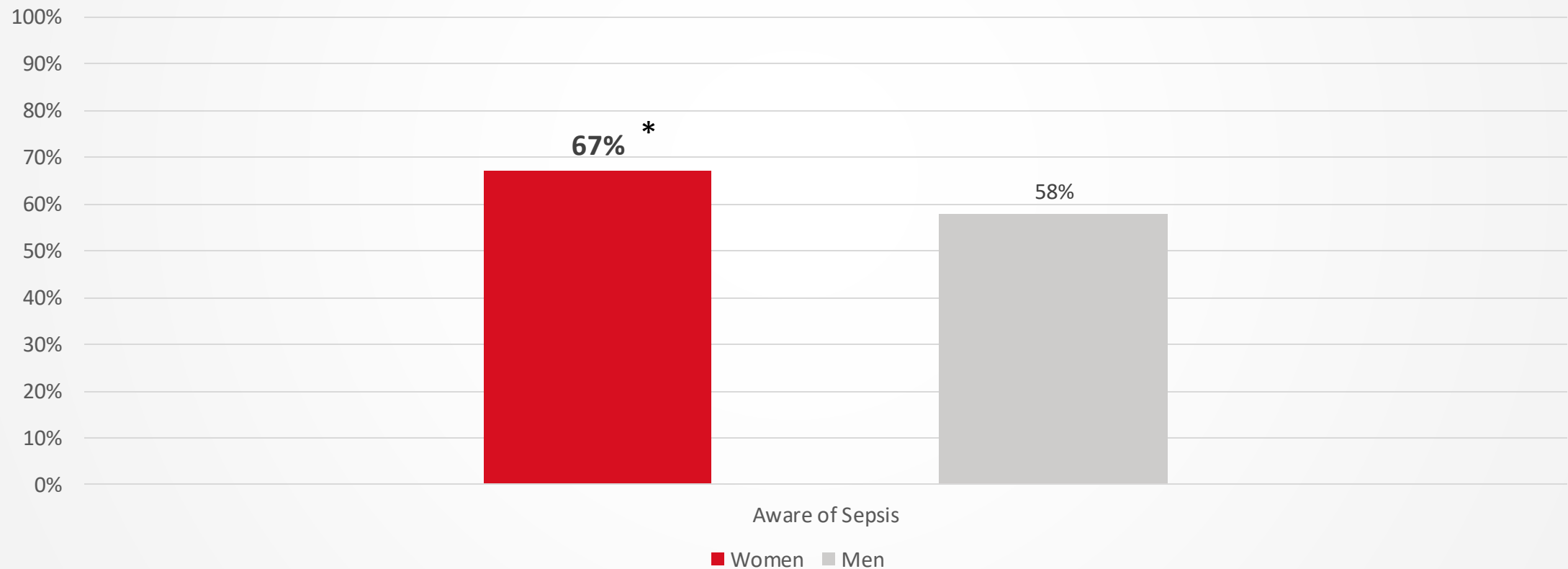


Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

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



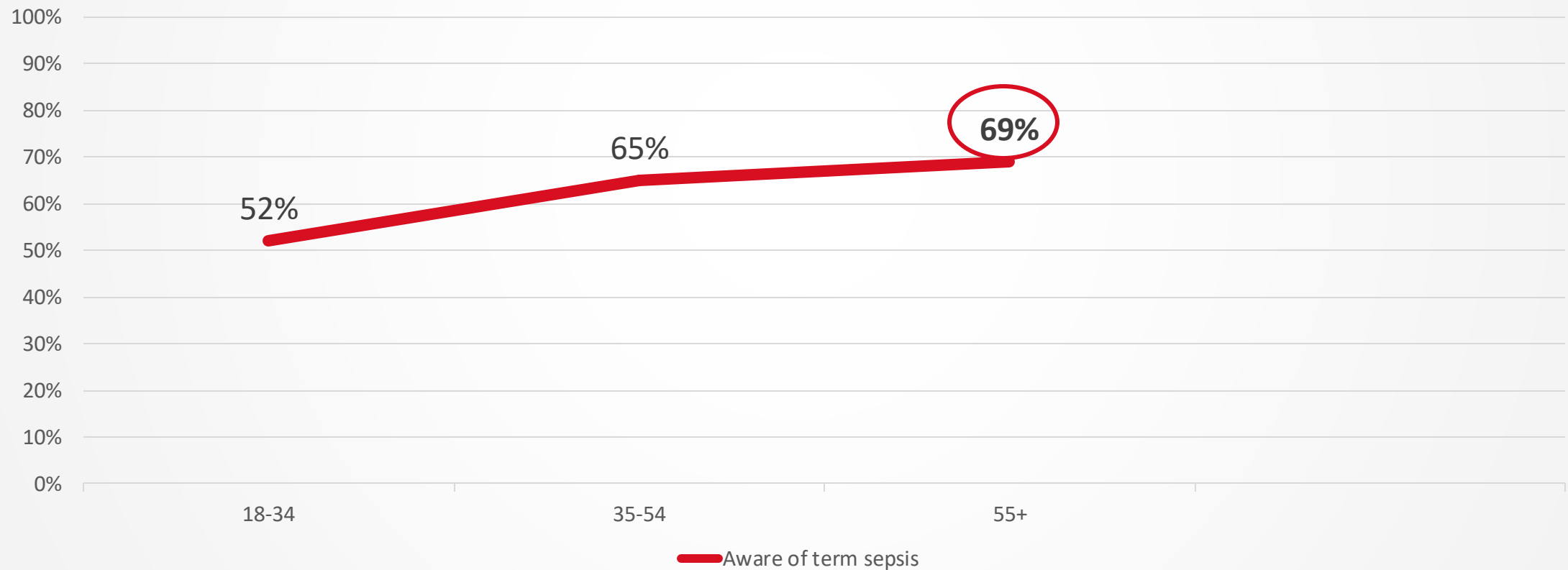
Aware of the term sepsis



Those 55 and older are significantly more likely to have heard the term sepsis than those that 18-34.



Aware of term sepsis

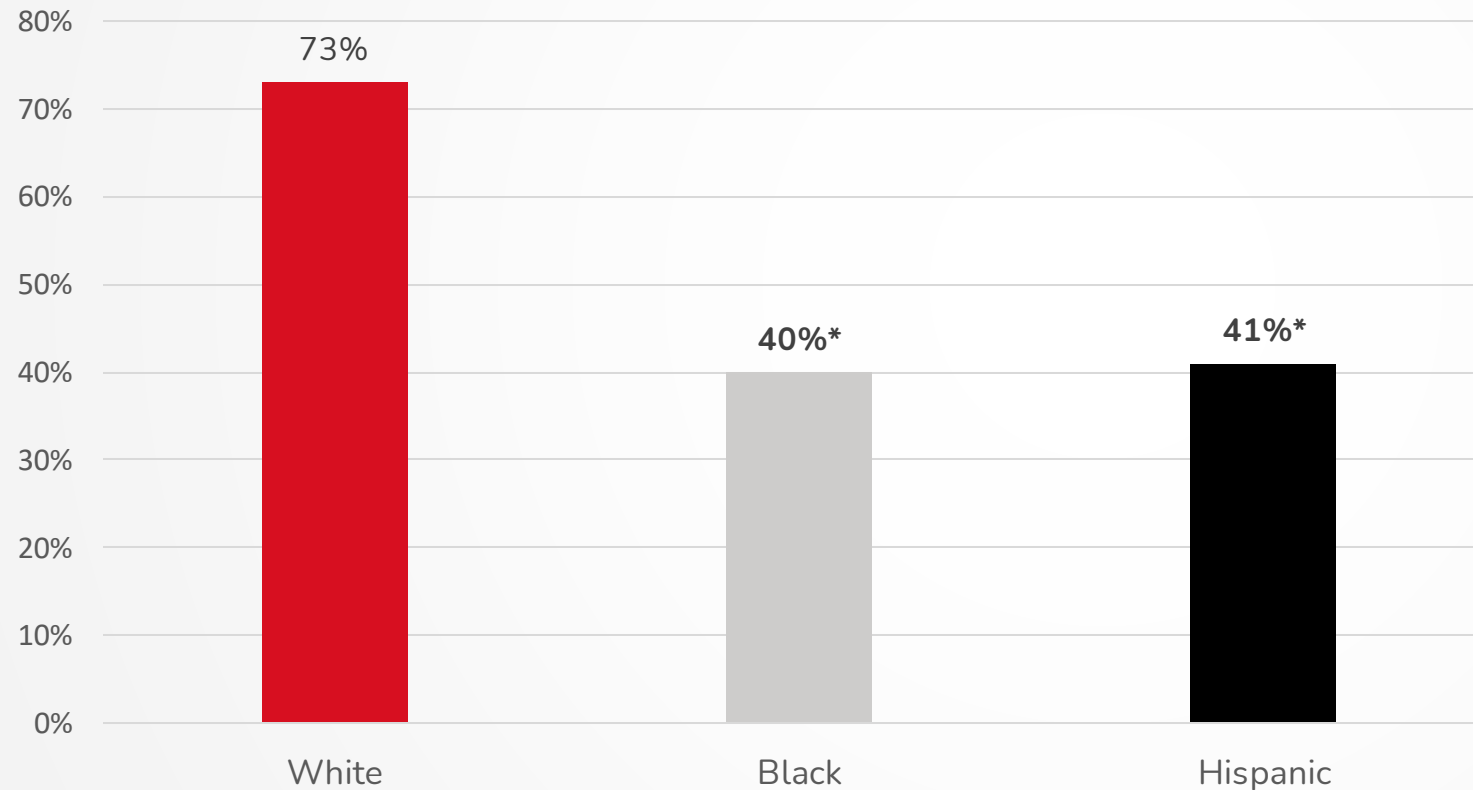


Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

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.

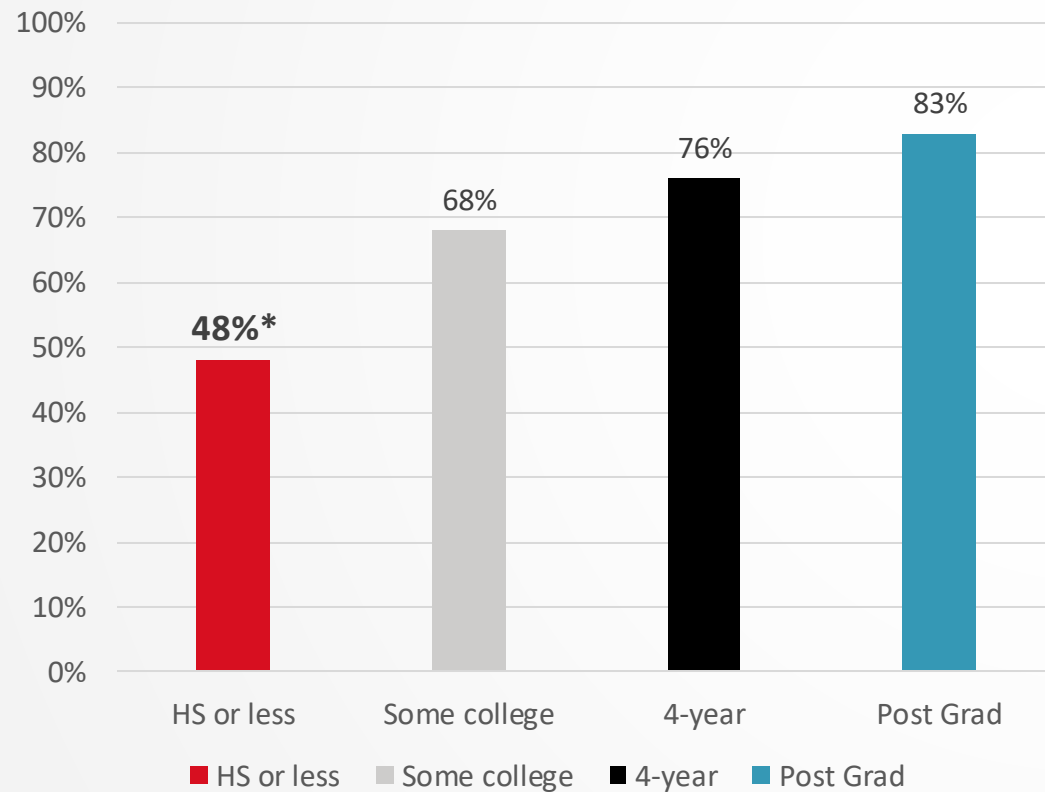
*= significantly lower than White

Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

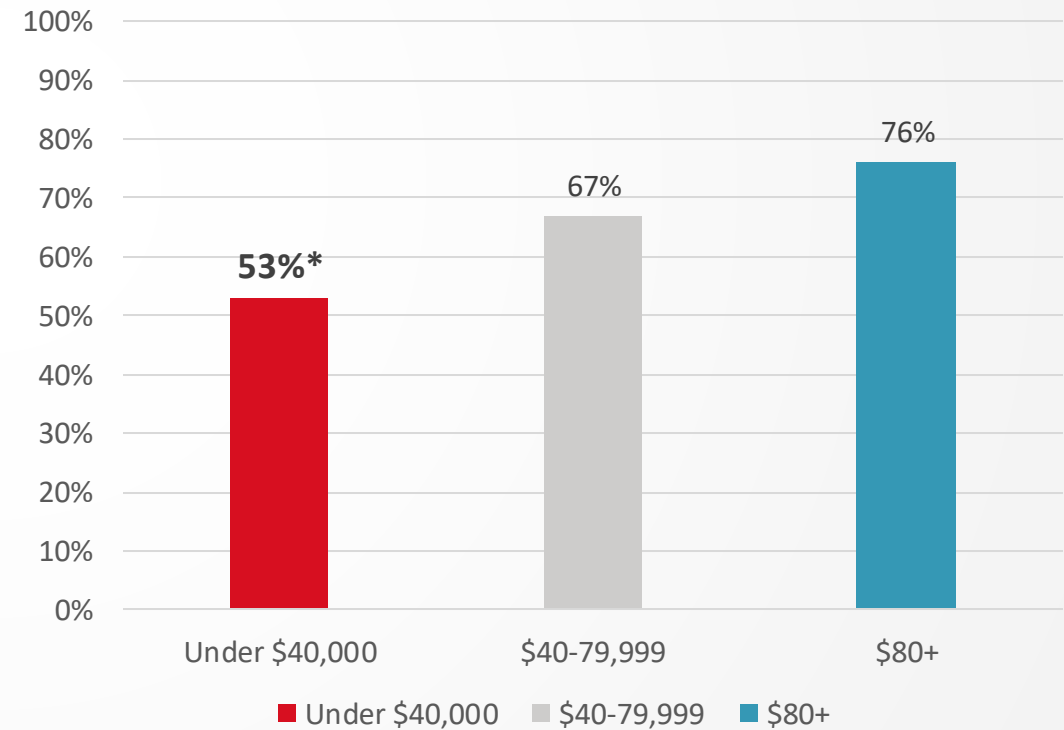
Those with less education and lower household income are less aware of the term sepsis.



Aware of the Term Sepsis: Education



Aware of the Term Sepsis: Annual Household Income



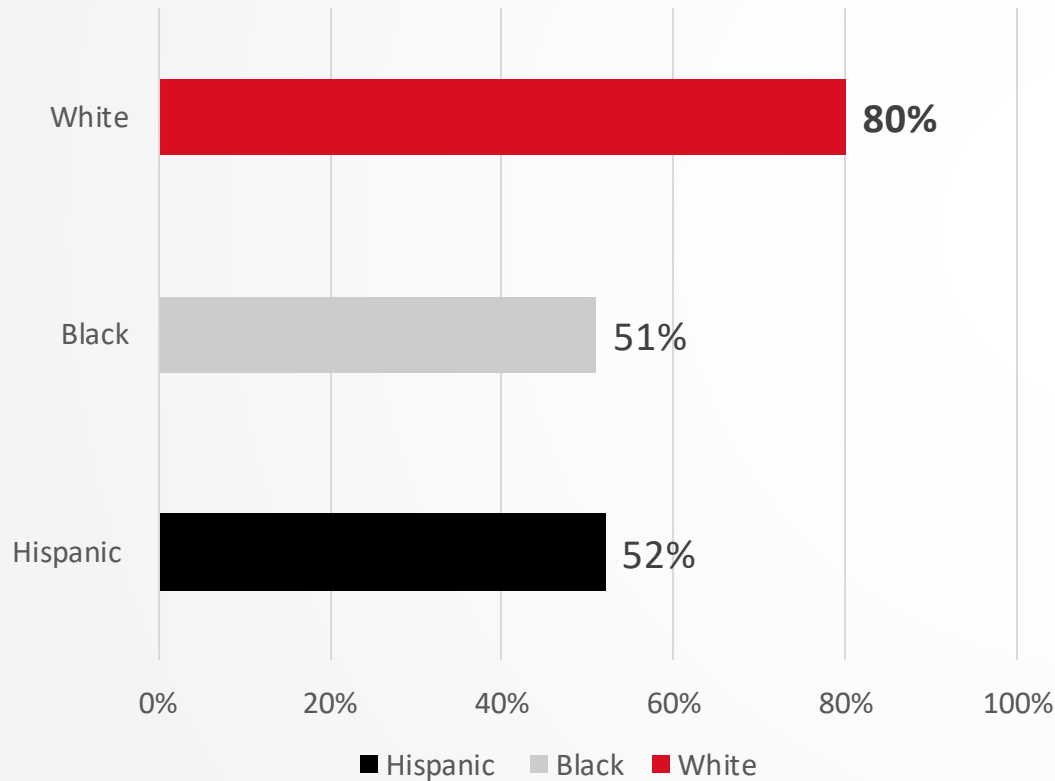
*= significantly lower than the other options

Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

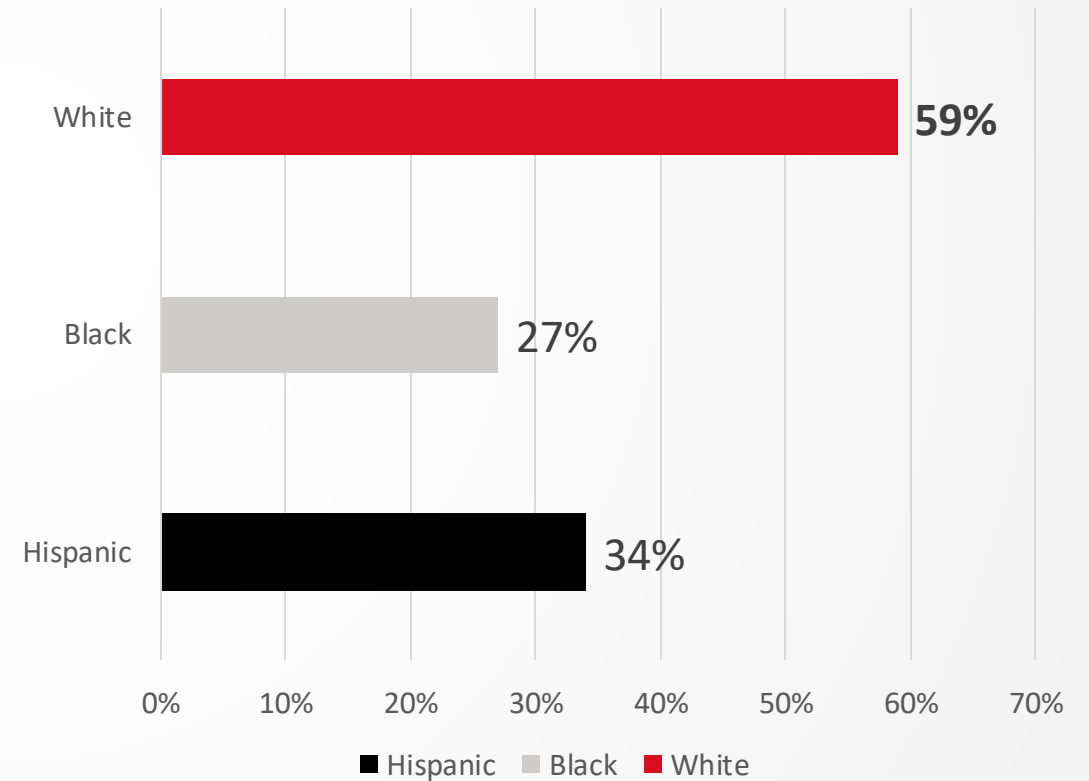
Significant race/ethnicity disparities exist within those of the same education level.



College Educated



HS or Less

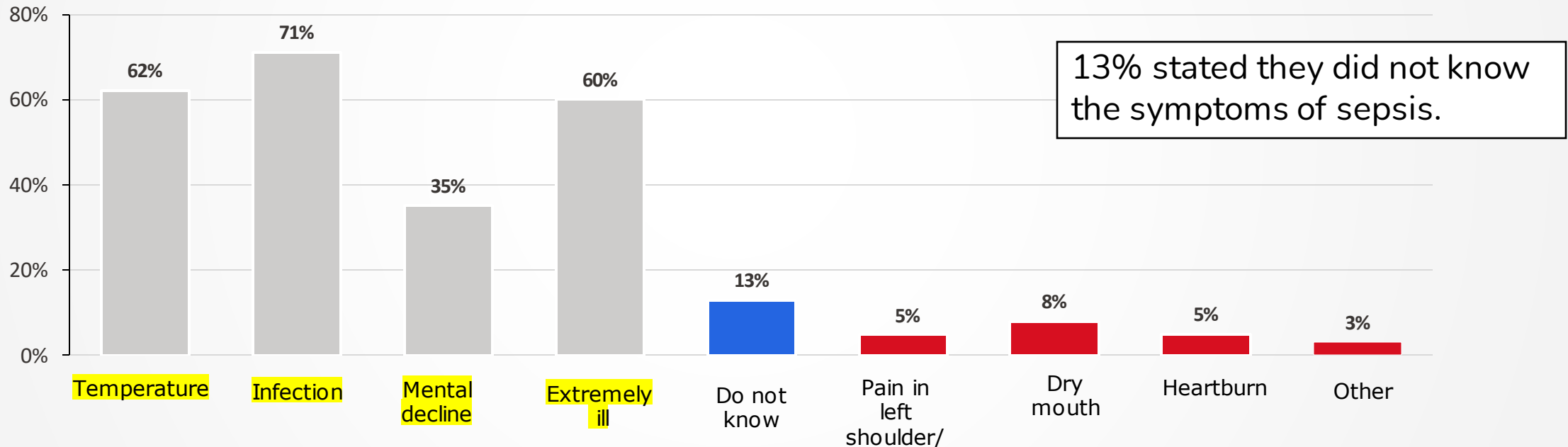


Q. Have you ever heard the term sepsis?

Among those that recognized the term sepsis, only 15% were able to correctly identify all four common symptoms of sepsis.



Symptoms



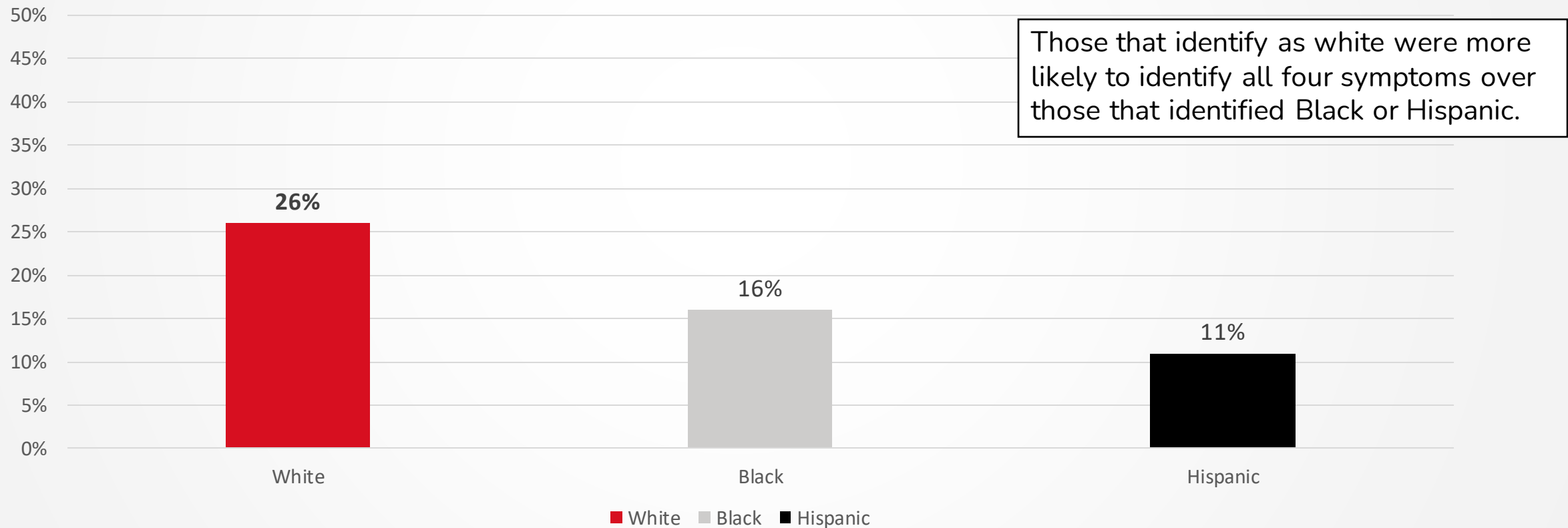
Note: Yellow highlights indicate sepsis symptoms.

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



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