

Saskatchewan Health

**HealthLine, West Nile
and Miscellaneous
Issues Poll**

Report of Results

July 2003

Highlights

- A very large majority, nearly nine in 10, have not heard of the new service generically, and a large majority of eight in 10 have not heard of it specifically.
- Roughly half indicated they would be unlikely to call the service, versus a third who felt they would be likely to call.
- Rating of Saskatchewan health service is split. Among those who have received service, or are members of a family in which a member received service, the favourable rating rises to nearly three in four. A similar proportion expect service to stay the same or improve over the next 10 years.
- Managing surgical wait times, recruiting health providers and preventing problem gambling attract largely negative ratings.
- Protecting the public from disease, managing available resources and discouraging use of tobacco receive largely favourable ratings.
- Most respondents have heard of West Nile virus, but very few think there is high risk of contracting it.
- Six in ten would endorse Malathion spraying if recommended by authorities. One in three would not.

Introduction

Objective

The objective of this poll was to establish a benchmark for awareness of health communications as promotion begins for the HealthLine call-in service. The poll also gauged opinion on a set of health-related issues not part of the HealthLine benchmark.

Methodology

Interviews were conducted across Saskatchewan with respondents aged 18 or older in households selected at random by computer. The fieldwork was done in the first two weeks of July, 2003.

A total of 816 interviews were completed. The results from a sample of this size can be expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Cautions

Interpreting the results in this report should be done with the following cautionary considerations in mind:

- Sample surveys provide estimates of the prevalence of the measured factors in the total population from which the sample is drawn. The estimates are statistically reliable within the ranges indicated, at the 95% level of confidence. This means that the actual prevalence of the factor could be greater or lesser than the estimate, by the amount of the margin of error. It also means that 5% of the time, the estimate can be expected to differ from reality by more than the margin of error. Results from sample surveys should therefore be treated as contributing to knowledge, but not as defining it precisely.
- While polling results for the entire sample are statistically reliable within the range indicated, results for sub-sets of the sample will have a larger margin of error because they are based on smaller numbers. They should be treated with more caution.
- Polls are “snapshot” approximations of reality. Subject to the foregoing considerations, they can be expected to reflect reality validly, within the indicated ranges, at the time they are conducted. Opinions change. It is important to bear in mind that a single poll cannot describe a trend.

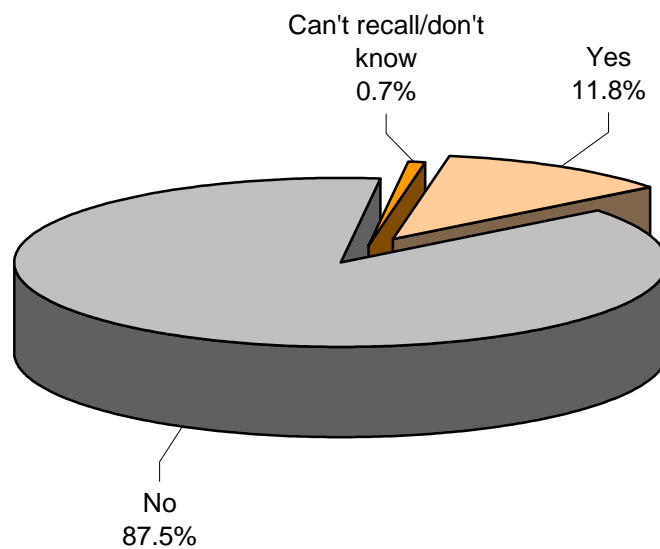
- Indicators from the sample can be projected to estimate the prevalence of the measured factor in the total population from which the sample was drawn. They cannot be interpreted as describing any other population.

Section A: Health Advice Line

A1. Have you recently seen, read, or heard anything about a new toll-free telephone health information service?

The vast majority (87.5%) of respondents have not heard of a new telephone health information service.

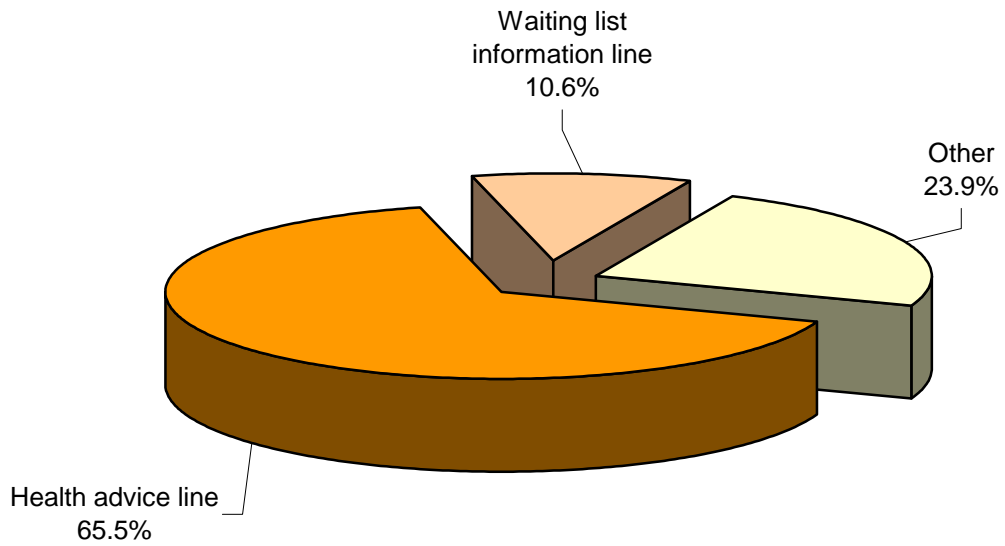
Have you recently seen, read, or heard anything about a new toll-free telephone health information service?



A2. Being as specific as you can, please describe what you know about the new telephone service.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents correctly identified HealthLine as a telephone health advice line.

Being as specific as you can, please describe what you know about the new telephone service.

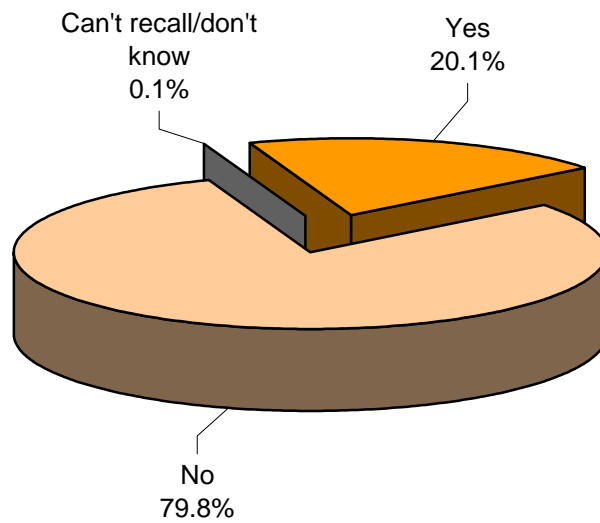


HealthLine is a free, confidential telephone service you can call to get health advice or information from a Registered Nurse. The service provides round-the-clock access to a qualified health professional.

A3. Do you recall recently hearing anything about HealthLine?

The percentage of respondents indicating their awareness of HealthLine increases from 12% to 20% after the service was explicitly described.

Do you recall recently hearing anything about HealthLine?

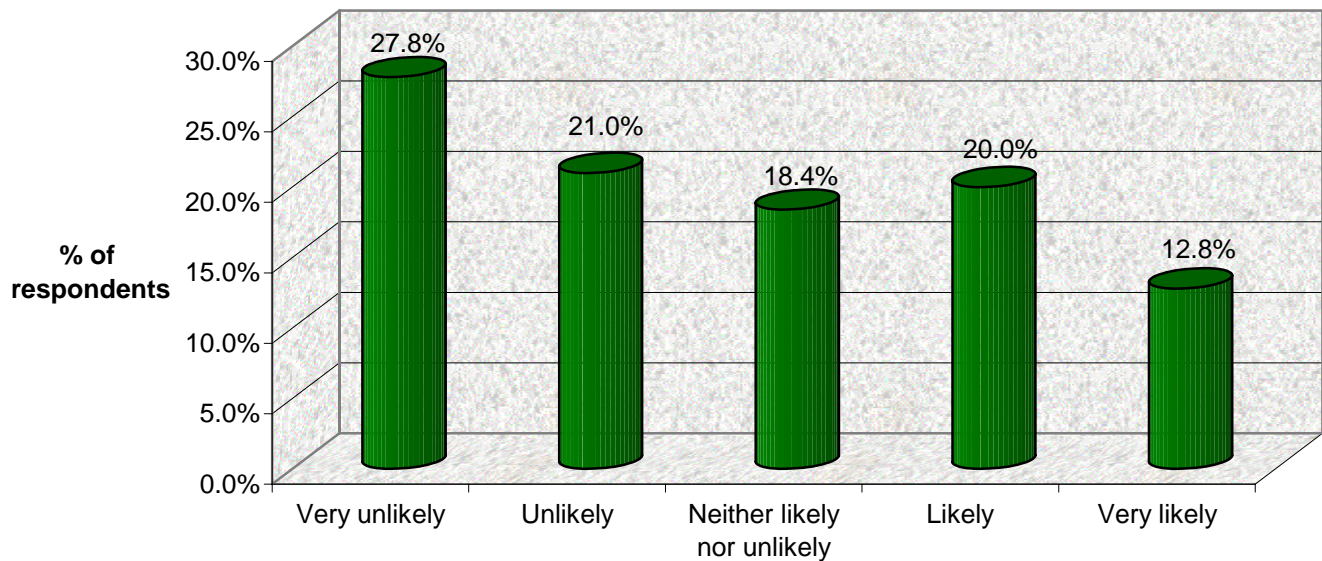


A4. On a five point scale where 1 is “very unlikely” and 5 is “very likely”, how likely would it be for you or someone in your household to call HealthLine?

One third of respondents would be likely to call HealthLine as presently understood. This proportion is outweighed by the half who say they would not be likely to call.

The number who indicate they are very unlikely to call is double the number at the opposite end of the scale, who indicate they would be very likely.

On a five point scale where 1 is “very unlikely” and 5 is “very likely”, how likely would it be for you or someone in your household to call HealthLine?

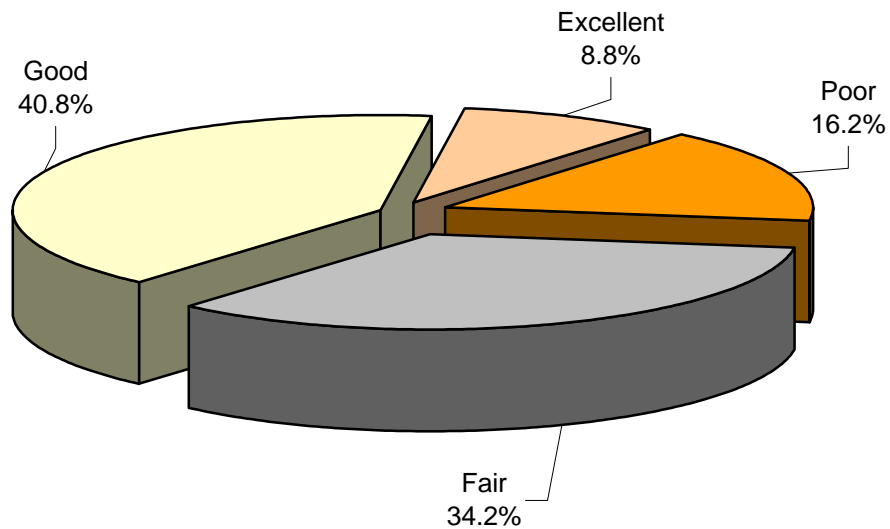


Section B: Health Services

B1. Overall, how would your rate the overall level of health services currently provided in Saskatchewan?

Opinion is split on rating the level of health service. However, the proportion with the strongest negative rating is twice the proportion with the strongest positive rating.

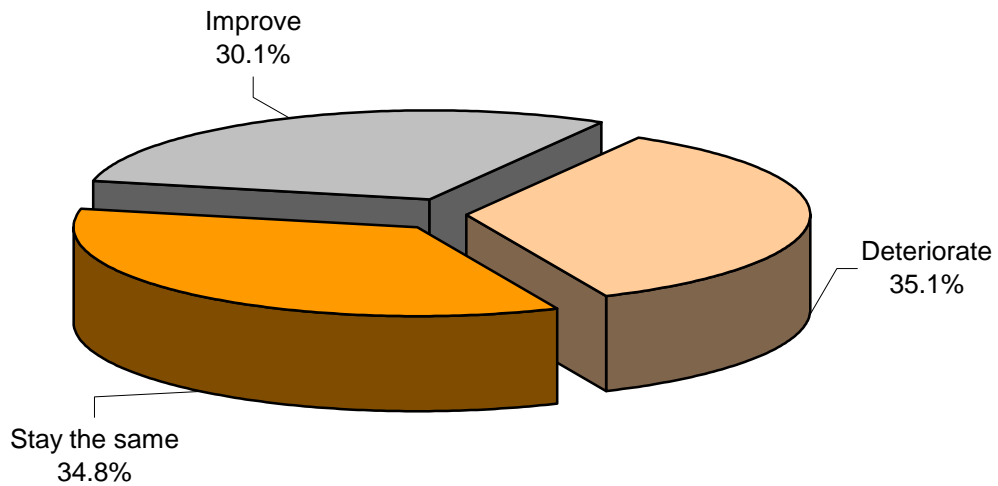
Overall, how would your rate the overall level of health services currently provided in Saskatchewan?



B2. Over the next 10 years, do you expect health services in Saskatchewan will improve, stay the same or deteriorate?

Two in three expect health service to stay on par or improve, but the number expecting deterioration is slightly larger than the number anticipating improvement.

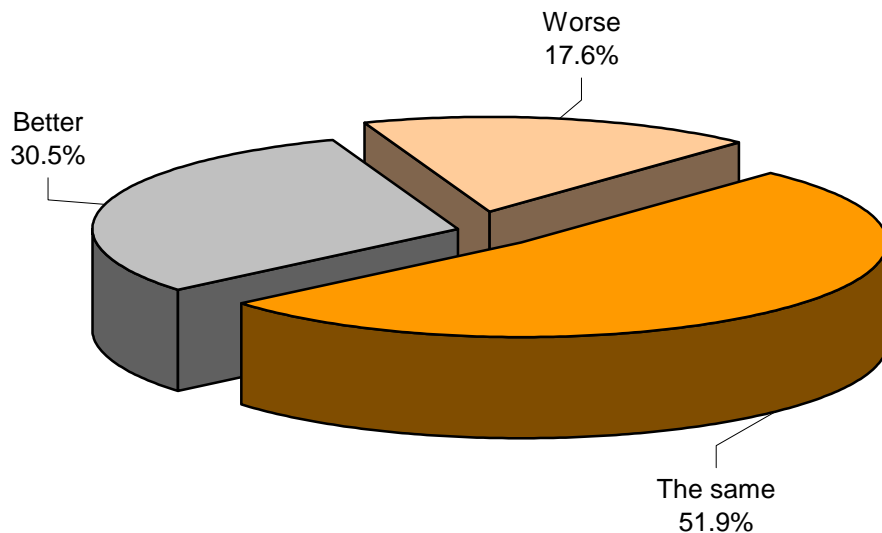
Over the next 10 years, do you expect health services in Saskatchewan will improve, stay the same or deteriorate?



B3. Based on what you have heard about health services in other provinces, would you rate Saskatchewan's health services as better, the same or worse?

A bare majority rates Saskatchewan health service as the same as in other provinces. However, the three in ten who rate Saskatchewan service as better is nearly double the one in six who find it worse.

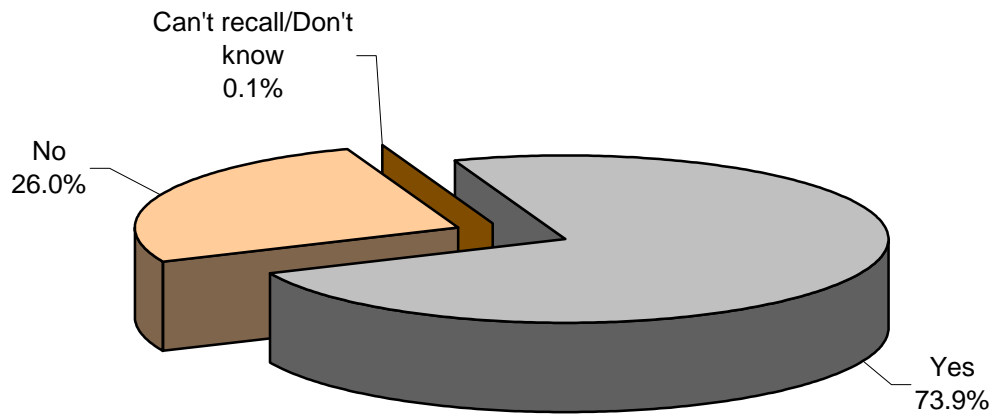
Based on what you have heard about health services in other provinces, would you rate Saskatchewan's health services as better, the same or worse?



B4. Have you or any member of your immediate family received health care services in the past 12 months?

Three quarters of respondents report they or an immediate family member received care in the last year.

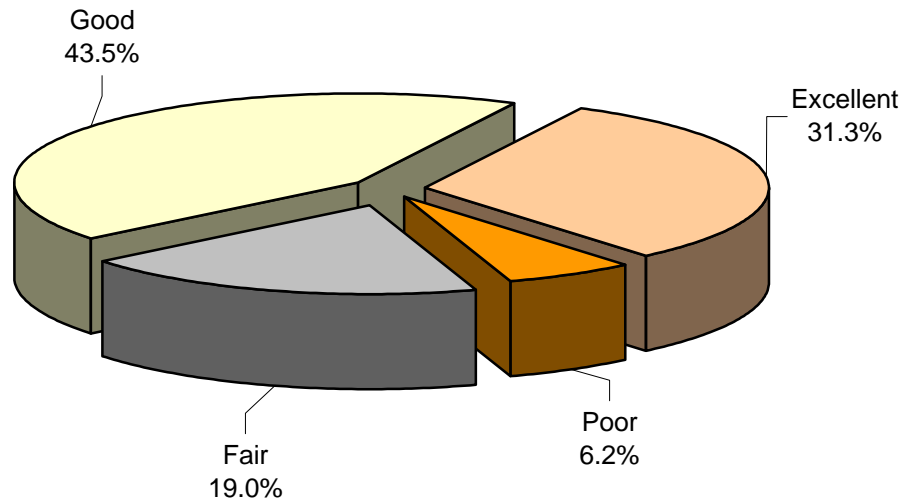
Have you or any member of your immediate family received health care services in the past 12 months?



B4a. How would you rate the quality of health services you or your family member received?

Among the three in four who reported receiving care in the last year, three in four gave it a positive rating. The number who gave the top rating is five times the number who gave the lowest rating.

How would you rate the quality of health services you or your family member received?

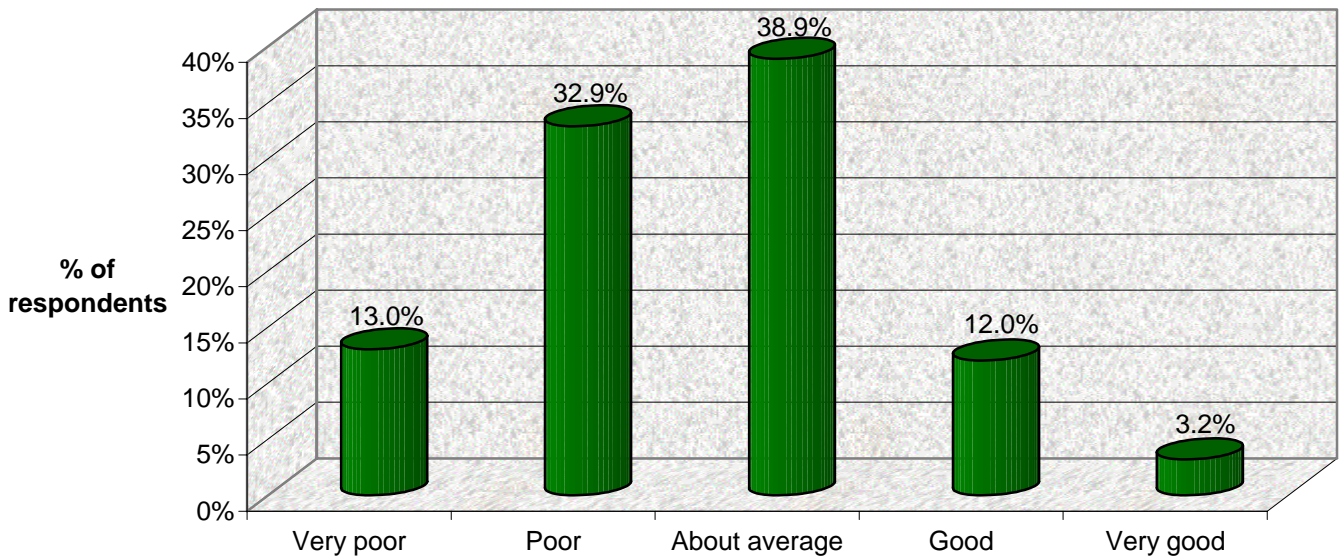


On a five point scale where 1 is “very poor” and 5 is “very good”, please rate how you think the Provincial Government has been managing the following health care issues:

B5a. Retaining and recruiting health providers:

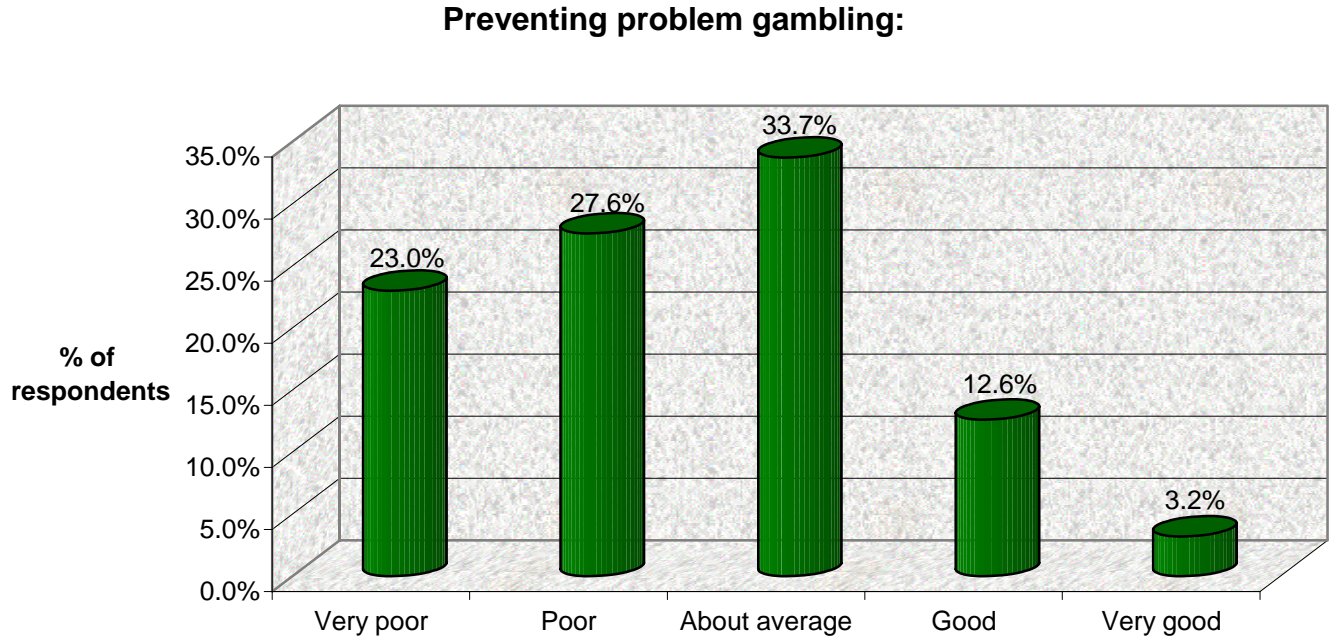
Responses tend to the negative on this query, with roughly three times as many choosing poor and very poor as chose good or very good.

Retaining and recruiting health providers:



B5b. Preventing problem gambling:

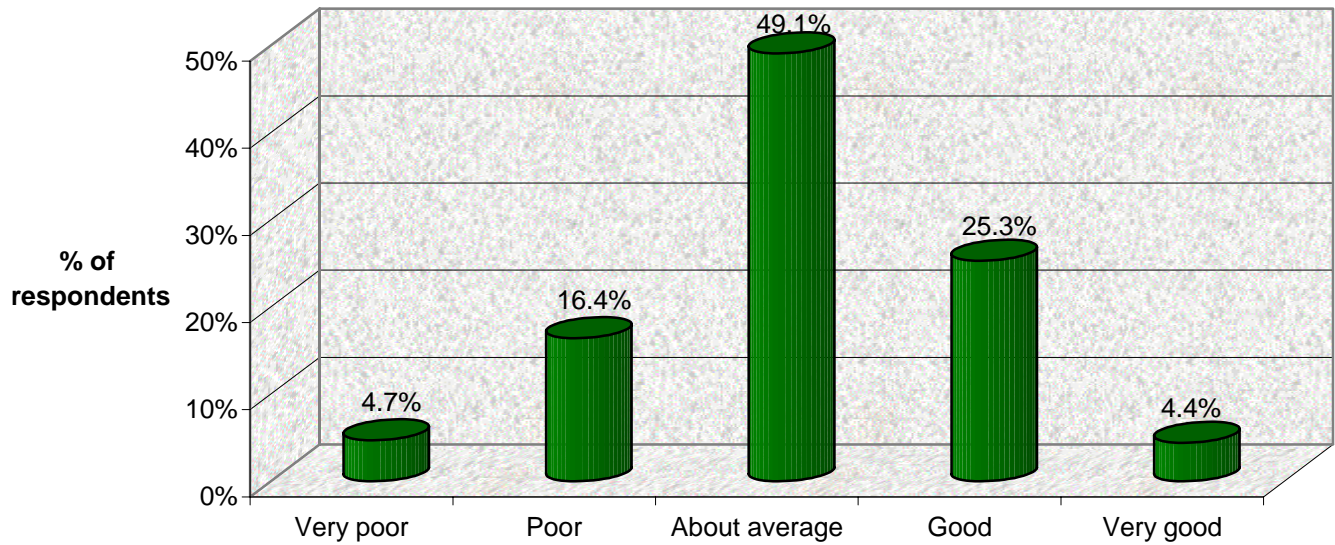
Nearly half gave negative responses, more than triple the proportion with a positive view.



B5c. Providing services within available resources:

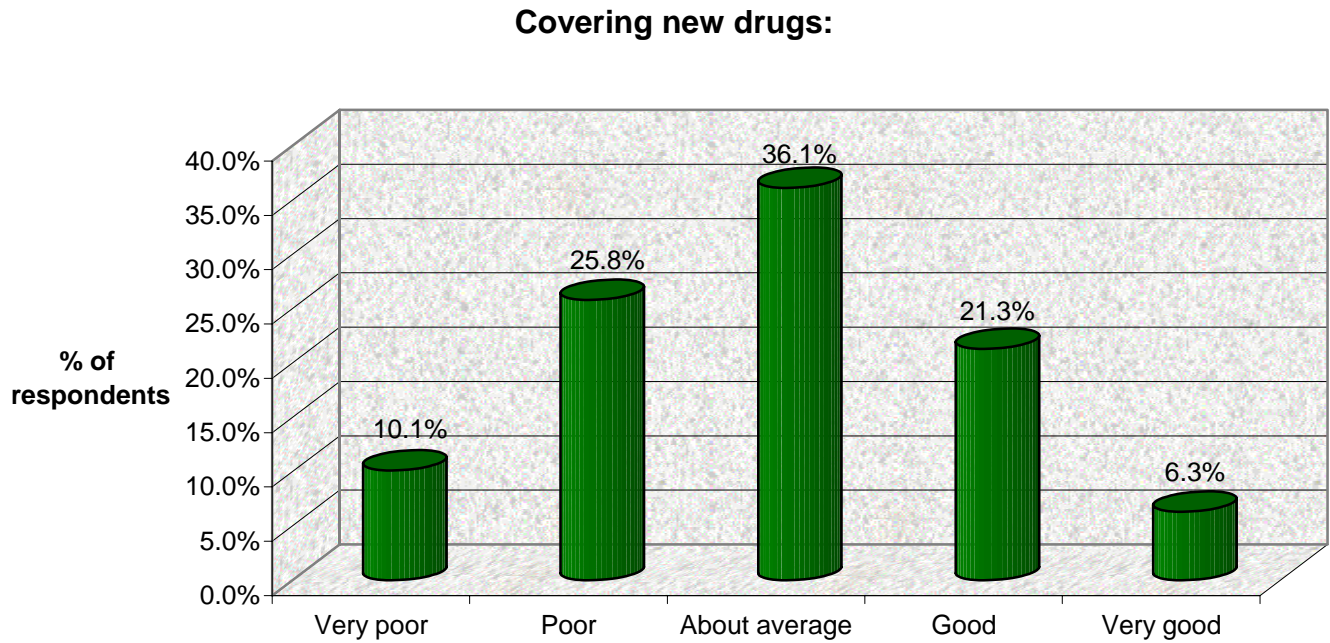
While half chose a middling rating, the proportion on the positive flank of the scale outweighs the proportion that has a negative perception.

Providing services within available resources:



B5d. Covering new drugs:

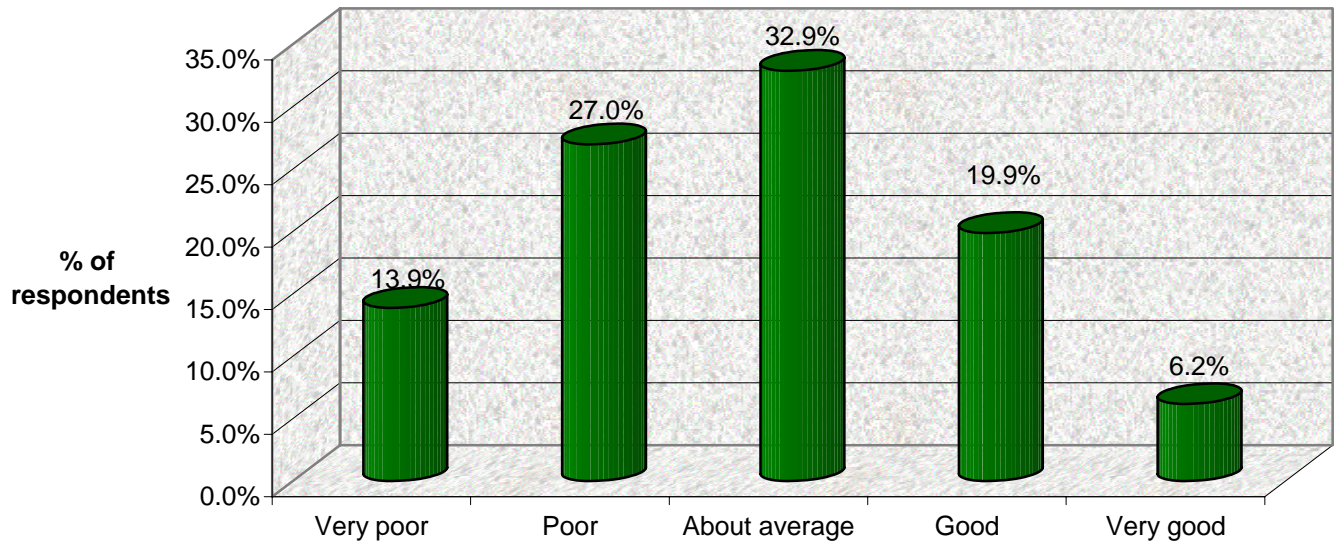
The distribution of responses closely approximates a bell curve, with a modestly higher weight on the negative.



B5e. Covering expensive drugs:

Rating of coverage for costly drugs is more dramatically negative than for new drugs. Four in ten incline to the negative versus one in four on the positive.

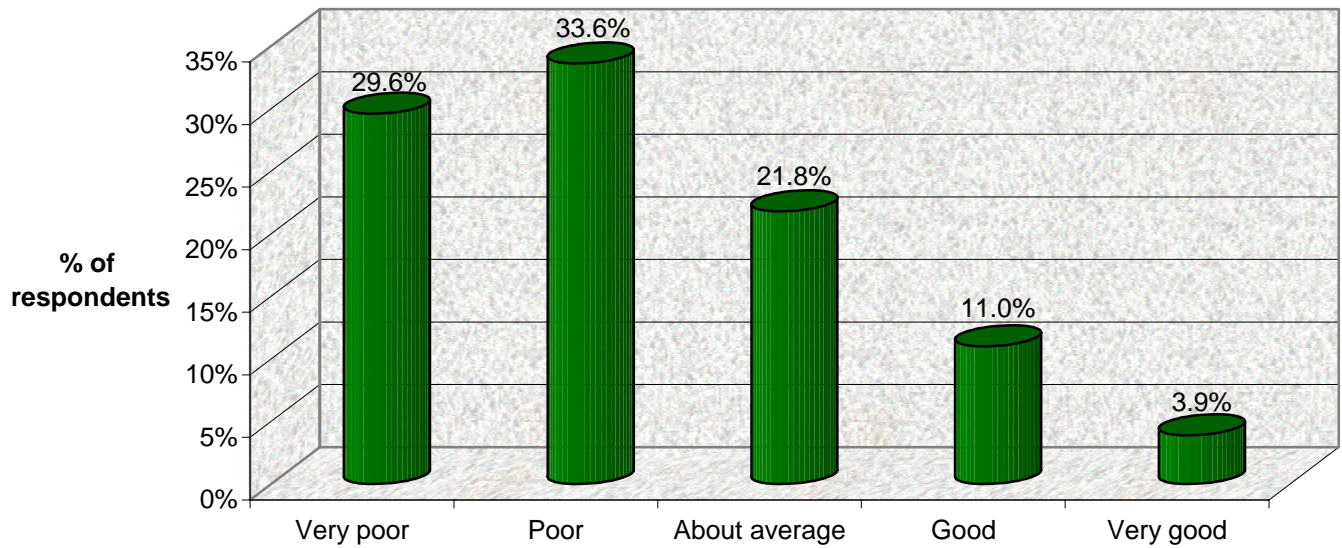
Covering expensive drugs:



B5f. Managing surgical waiting times:

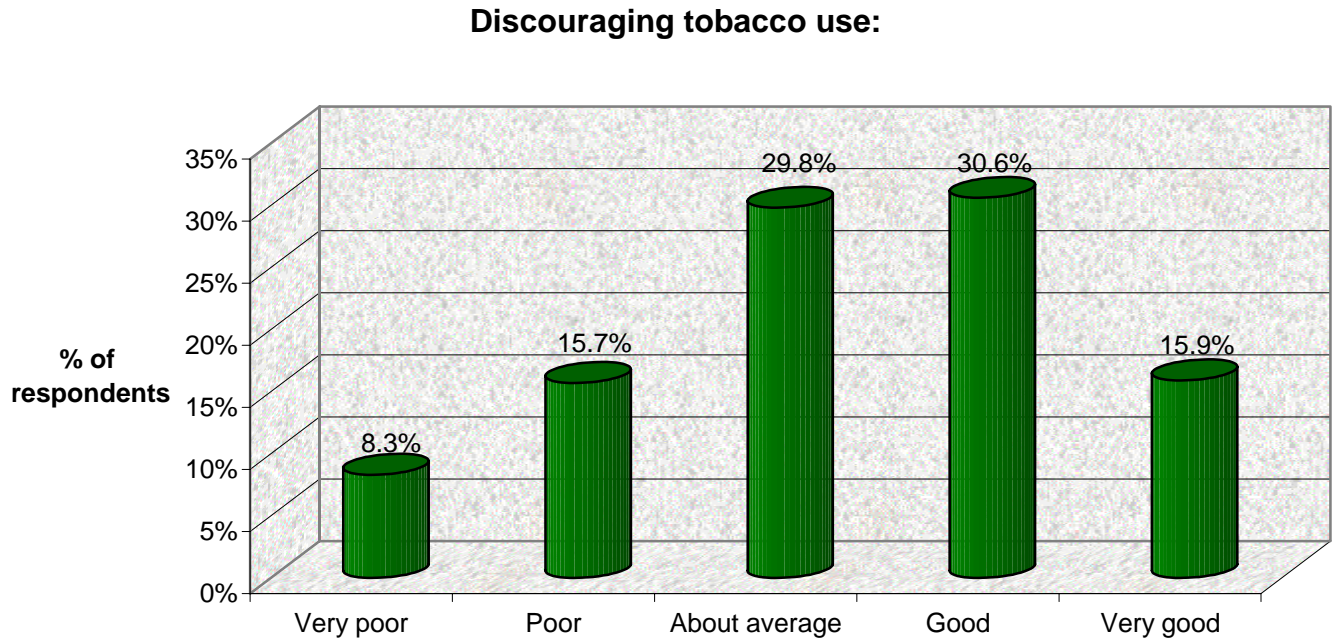
Perception of wait time management is heavily negative, with nearly two thirds scoring the government sub-par.

Managing surgical waiting times:



B5g. Discouraging tobacco use:

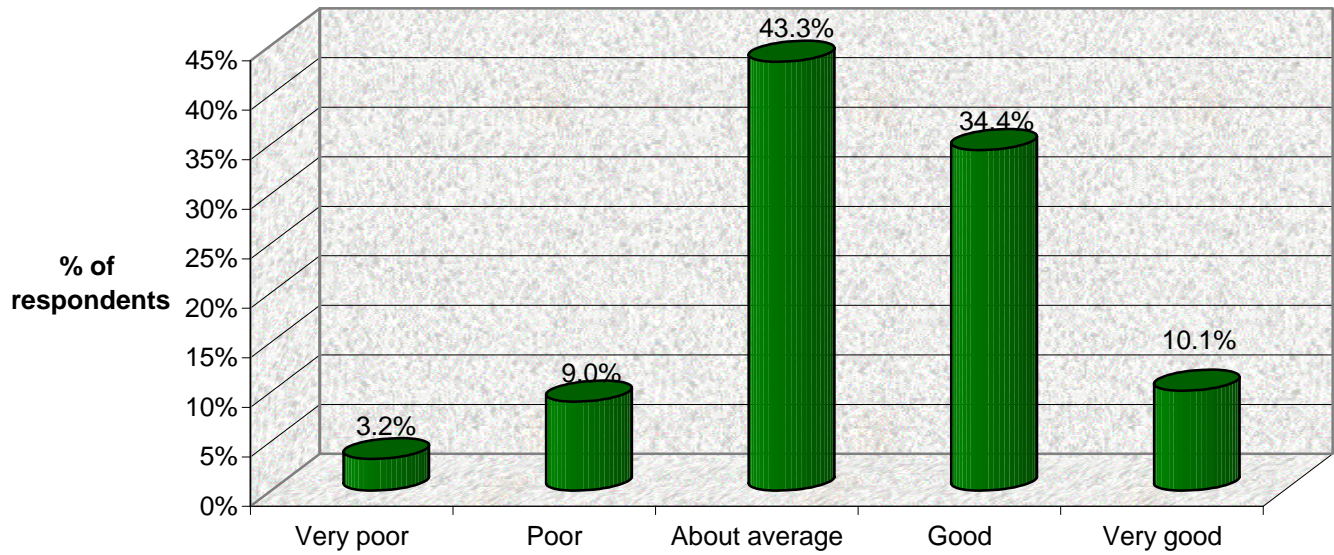
Respondents tend to find the government doing a positive job on discouraging use of tobacco.



B5h. Protecting public health from diseases:

Rating on this measure tends strongly to the favourable.

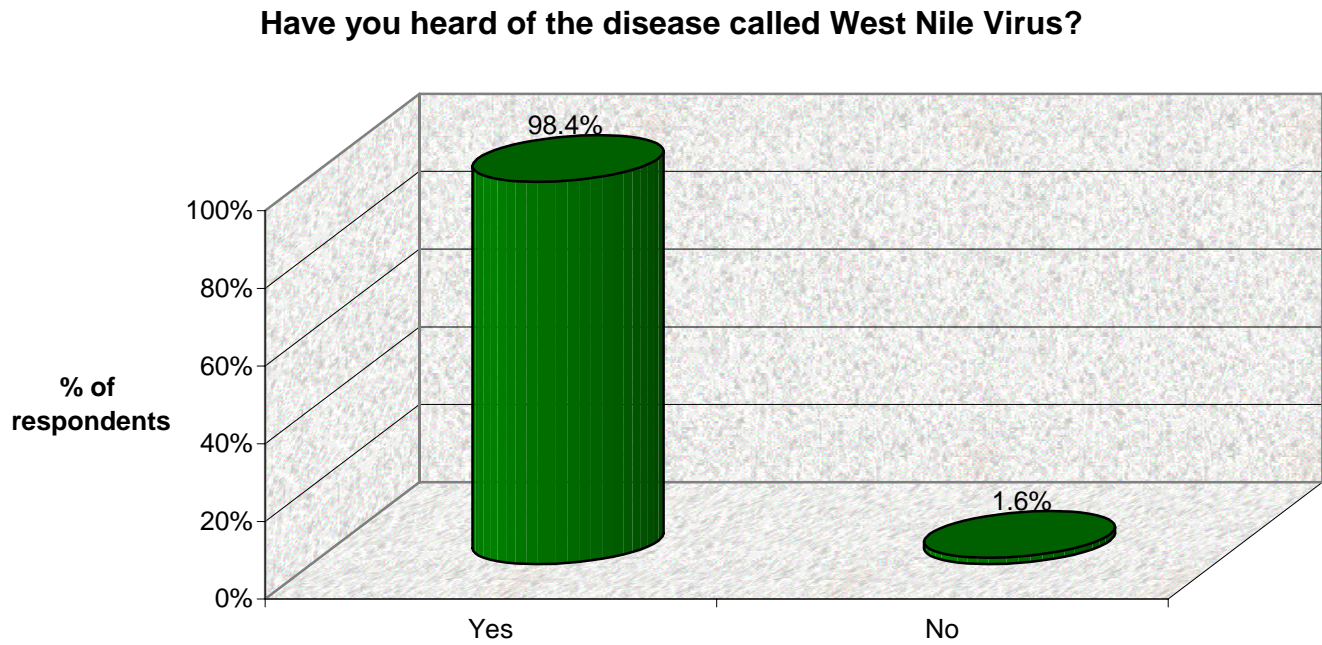
Protecting public health from diseases:



Section C: West Nile Virus

C1. Have you heard of the disease called West Nile Virus?

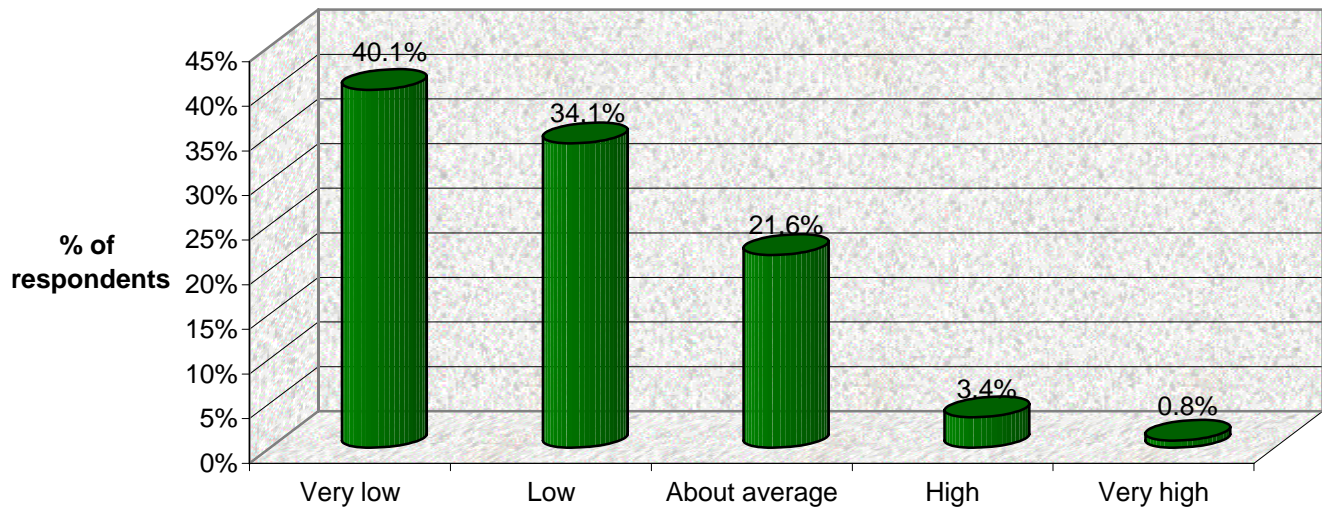
The vast majority of respondents are familiar with West Nile Virus.



C2. How high do you think your risk is of getting West Nile Virus this summer?

Concern can be characterized as low. Only one in twenty gave a positive response.

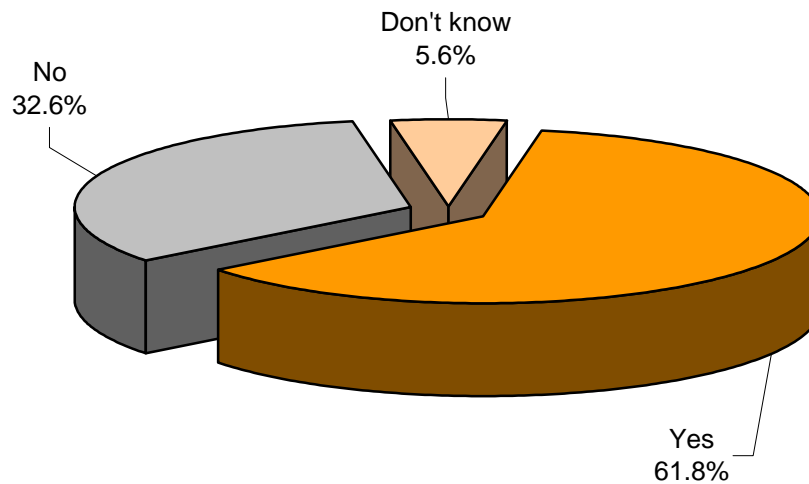
How high do you think your risk is of getting West Nile Virus this summer?



C3.If Public Health recommended the reduction of mosquito populations to reduce the risk of West Nile Virus, would you be in favour of fogging with Malathion?

Support outweighs opposition by two to one.

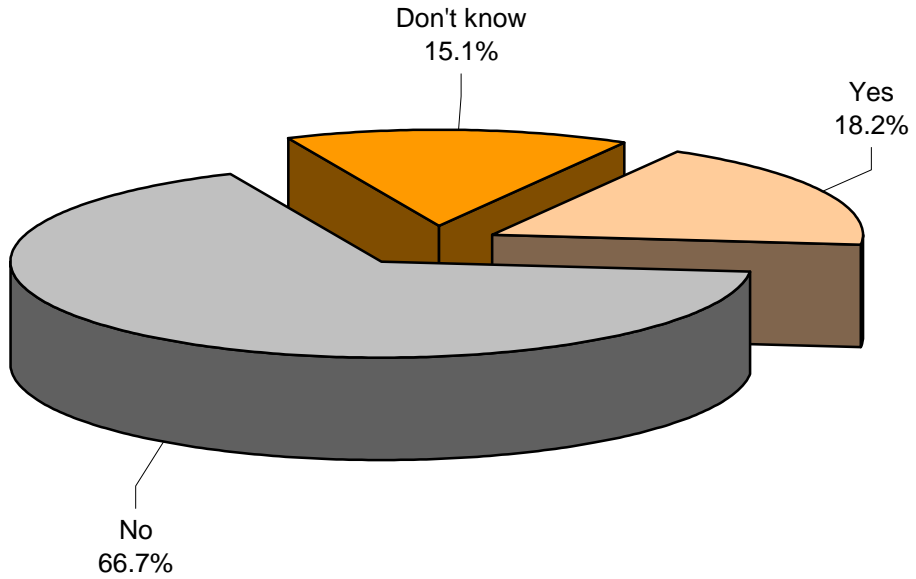
If Public Health recommended the reduction of mosquito populations to reduce the risk of West Nile Virus, would you be in favour of fogging with Malathion?



C4. Do you consider yourself to be sensitive to Malathion?

Fewer than 1 in 5 respondents consider themselves to be sensitive to Malathion.

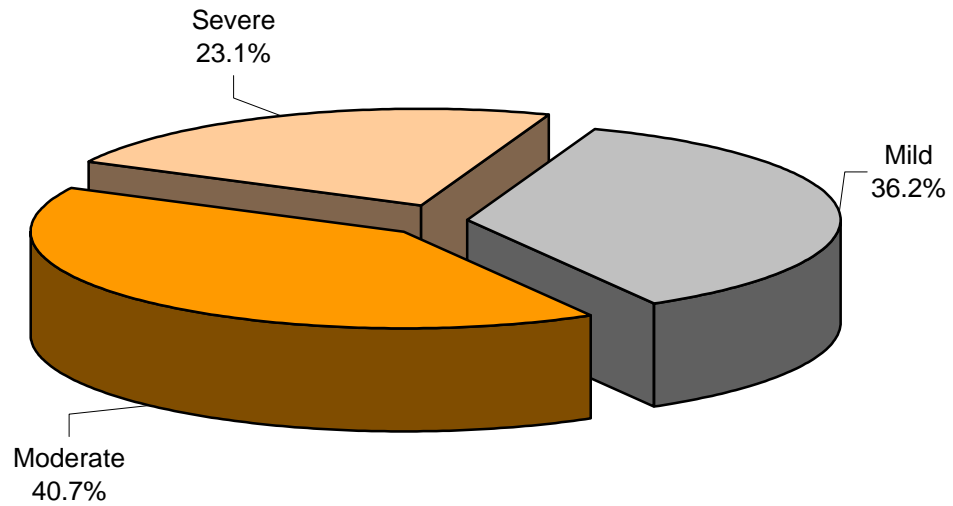
Do you consider yourself to be sensitive to Malathion?



C4a. Is your sensitivity to Malathion mild, moderate or severe?

Of those sensitive to Malathion, less than one-quarter said their sensitivity is severe.

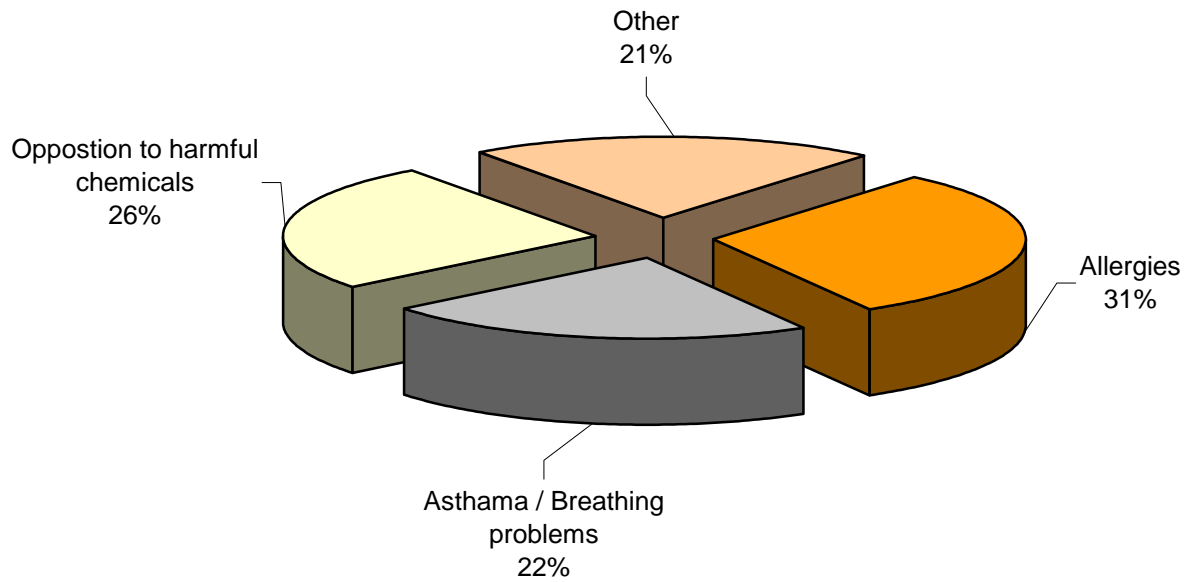
Is your sensitivity to Malathion mild, moderate or severe?



C4b. What condition do you have that you believe makes you sensitive to Malathion?

The largest group of respondents said that their sensitivity to Malathion is due to allergies.

What condition do you have that you believe makes you sensitive to Malathion?



C5b. What ways have you heard of to protect yourself against West Nile Virus?

The most popular protection against West Nile Virus appears to be insect repellent followed by protective clothing.

What ways have you heard of to protect yourself against West Nile Virus?

