# The Burden of Cancer in the United States: Understanding the Impact of Knowledge, Behavior and Legislation

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HINTS collects national data on the U.S. public's use of cancer-related information to:

- Track changing patterns, needs, and information opportunities in health
- Assess cancer information access and usage
- Provide information on cancer risk perceptions

HINTS monitors changes in the rapidly evolving field of health communications.

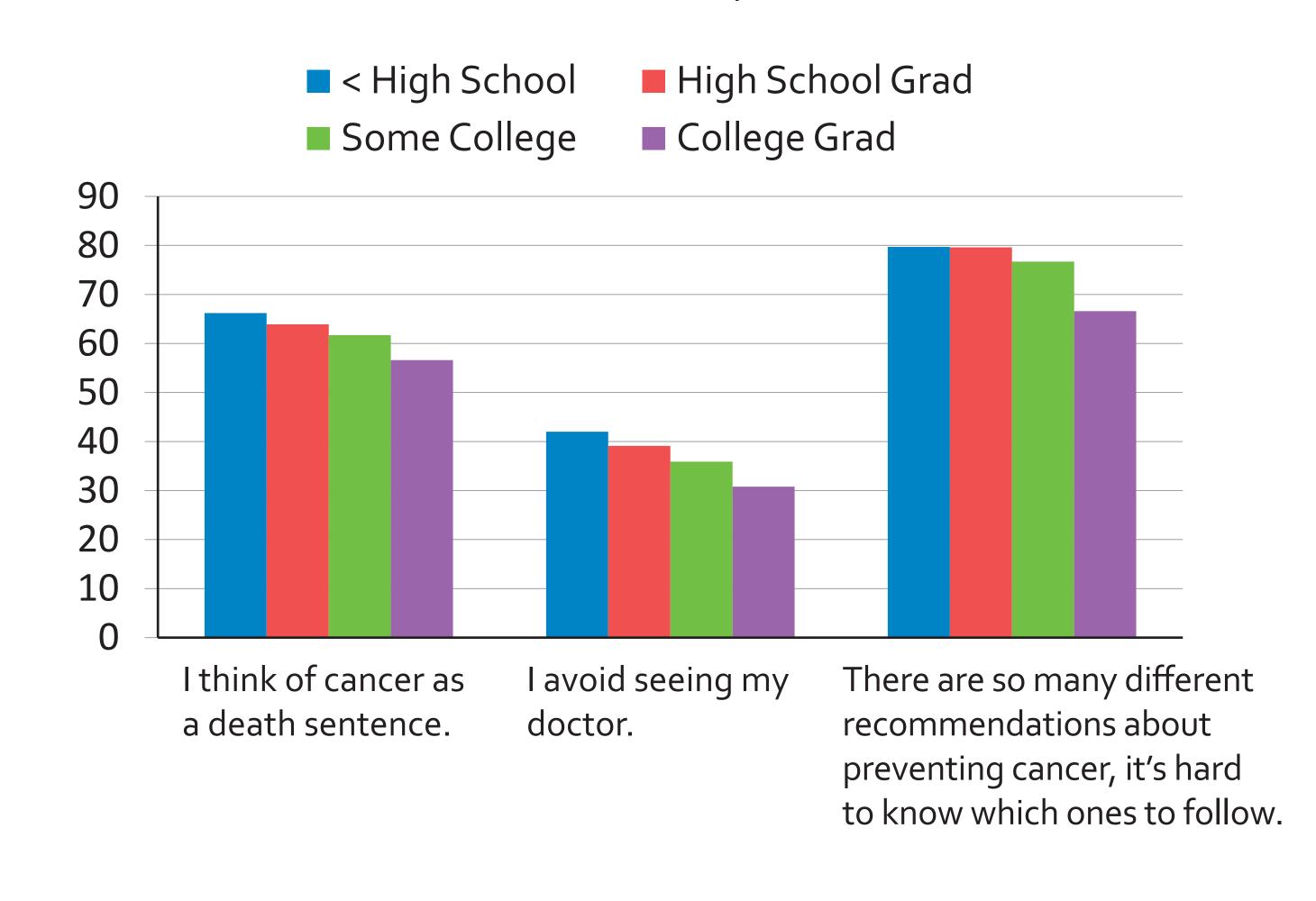
The survey data can be used to understand the communication barriers that prevent the public from getting important information.

#### **OVERVIEW**

Research shows that we could **reduce approximately 50% of all cancer deaths** by getting the public to engage in healthy behaviors through increased physical activity, better nutrition and tobacco control. We could further ameliorate the effects of cancer by getting people screened regularly for certain cancers. One important aspect of effective cancer control is getting patients to regularly visit their doctors to learn about healthy behaviors and get screened. Understanding the barriers to seeing doctors is paramount in cancer control research.

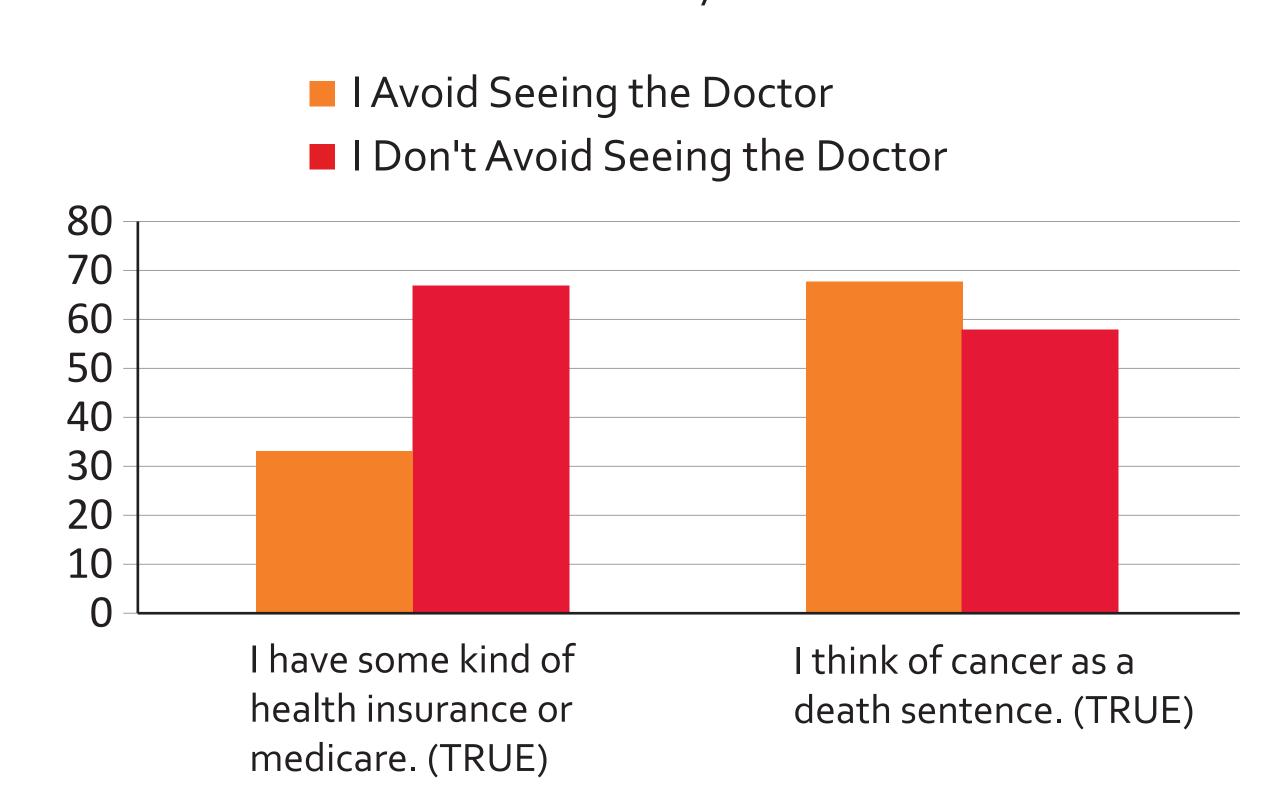
#### BELIEFS AND BARRIERS BY EDUCATION

Individuals with more education are less likely to perceive cancer as a death sentence and are more likely to visit their doctors.



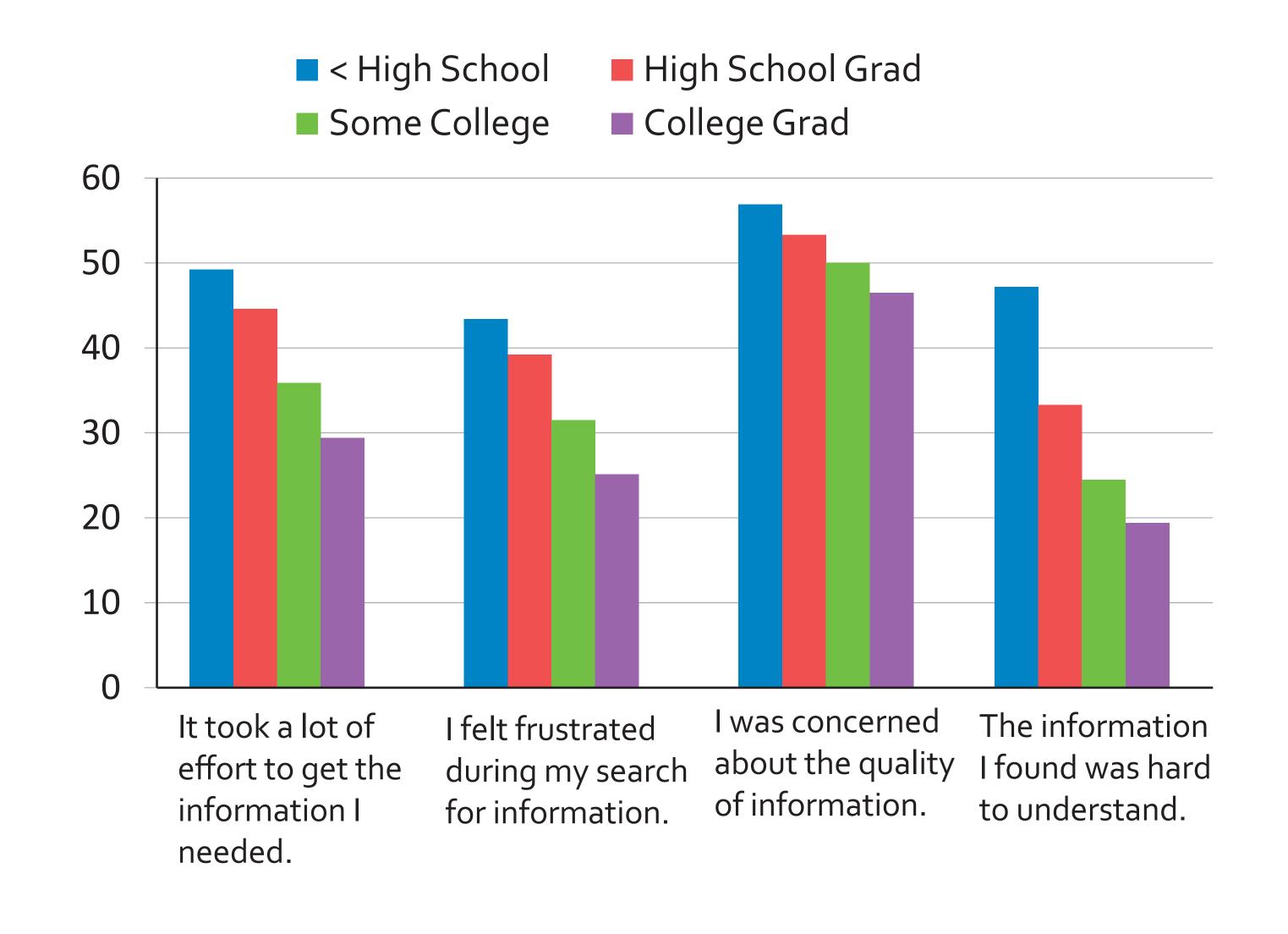
## DOCTOR AVOIDANCE AND INSURANCE

Those who do not see cancer as a death sentence and those who have insurance are more likely to visit their doctors.



# CANCER INFORMATION SEEKING BY EDUCATION

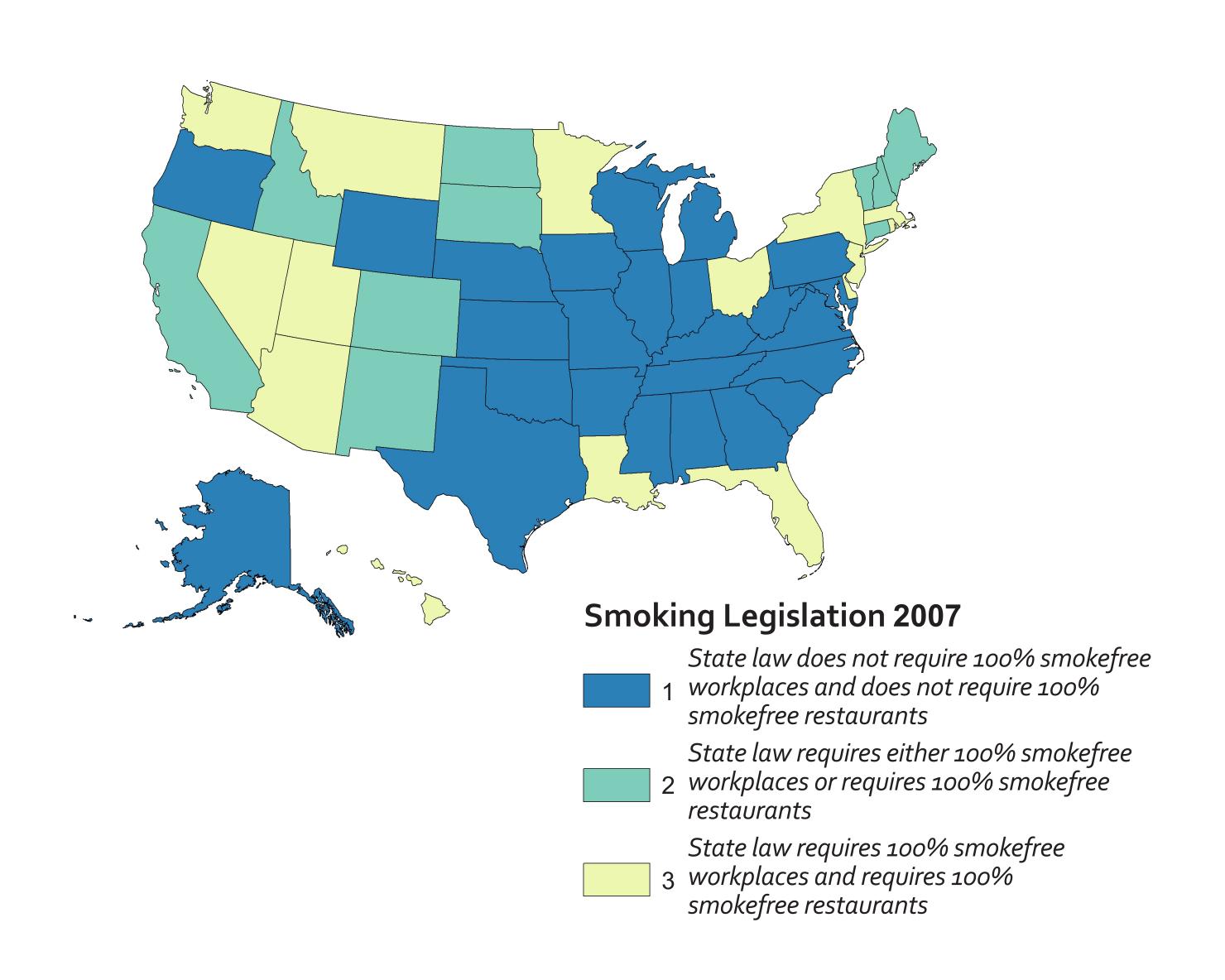
Effective cancer control requires patients to easily obtain and comprehend cancer information. Understanding barriers to effectively obtaining this information is critical.



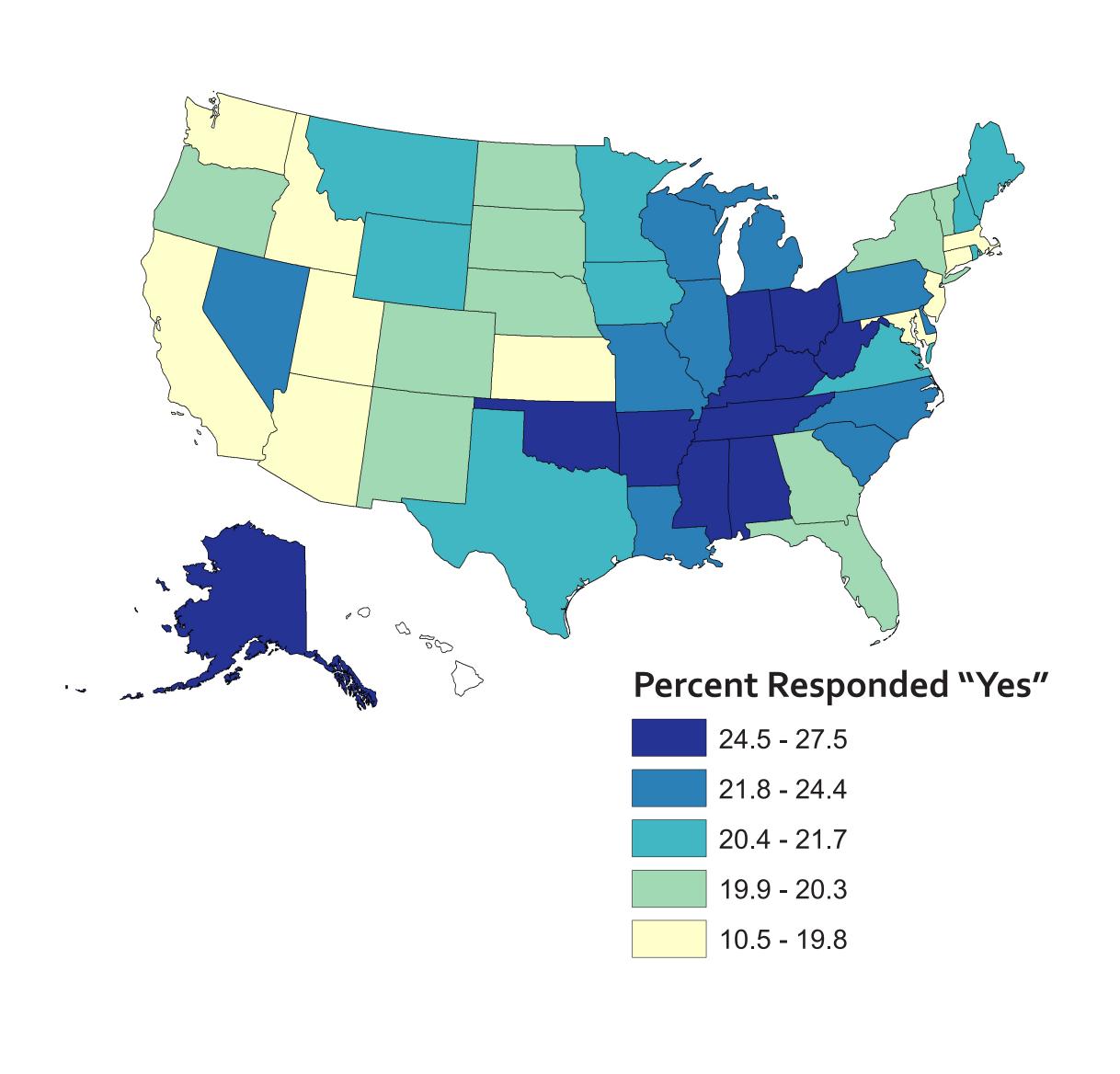
#### **SMOKING AND RISK OF DEATH**

- Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S.
- Knowledge about the health consequences of tobacco is not evenly distributed.
- Tobacco use and related diseases are more prevalent in certain geographic areas, and among certain racial/ethnic populations and people with low socioeconomic status.
- The geographic distribution of lower levels of knowledge about smoking and lung cancer correlates with the geographic distribution of higher death from cancers of the lung and bronchus.
- Legislation is an important tool in the fight to reduce smoking rates.

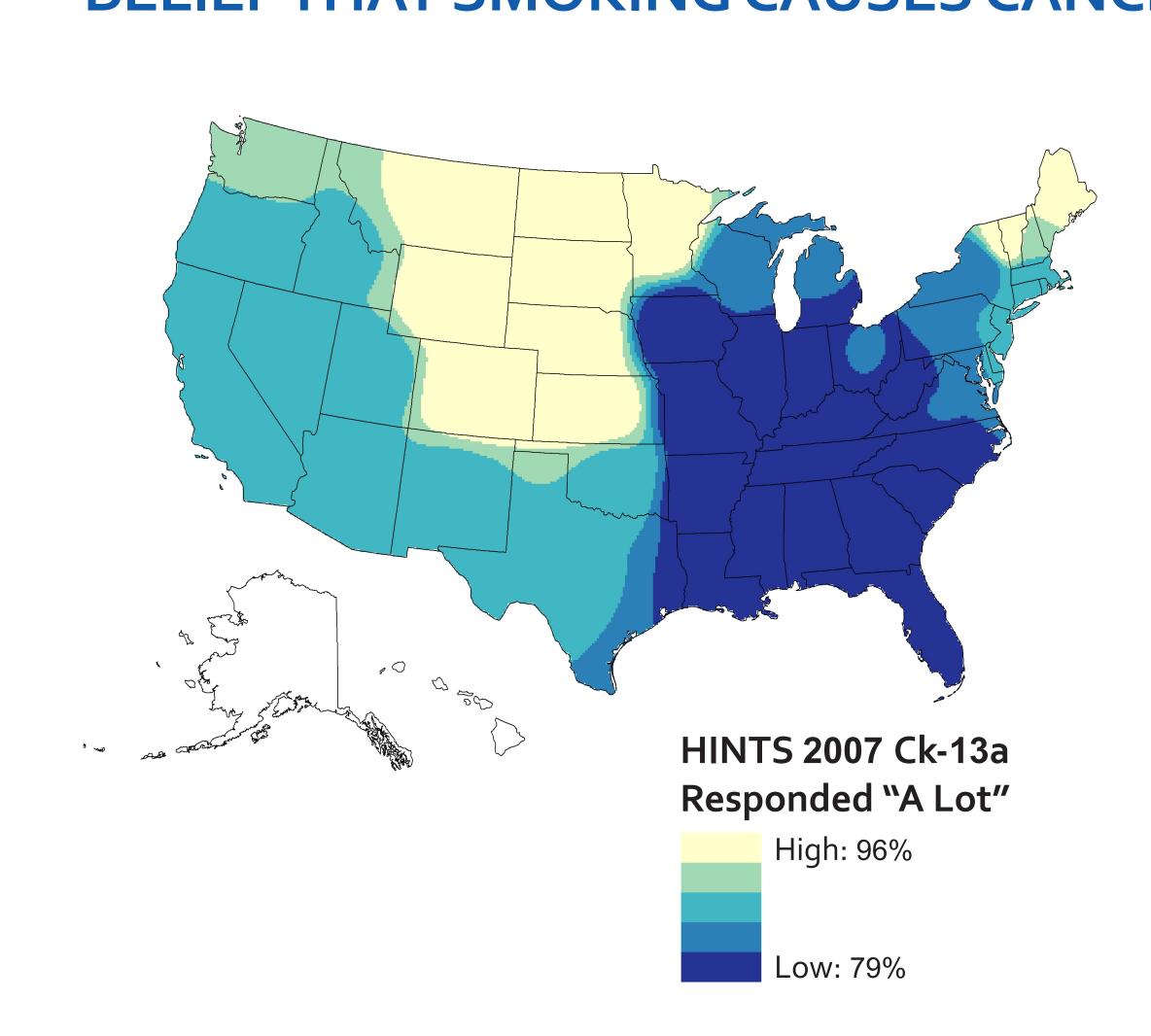
#### **SMOKING LEGISLATION BY STATE**



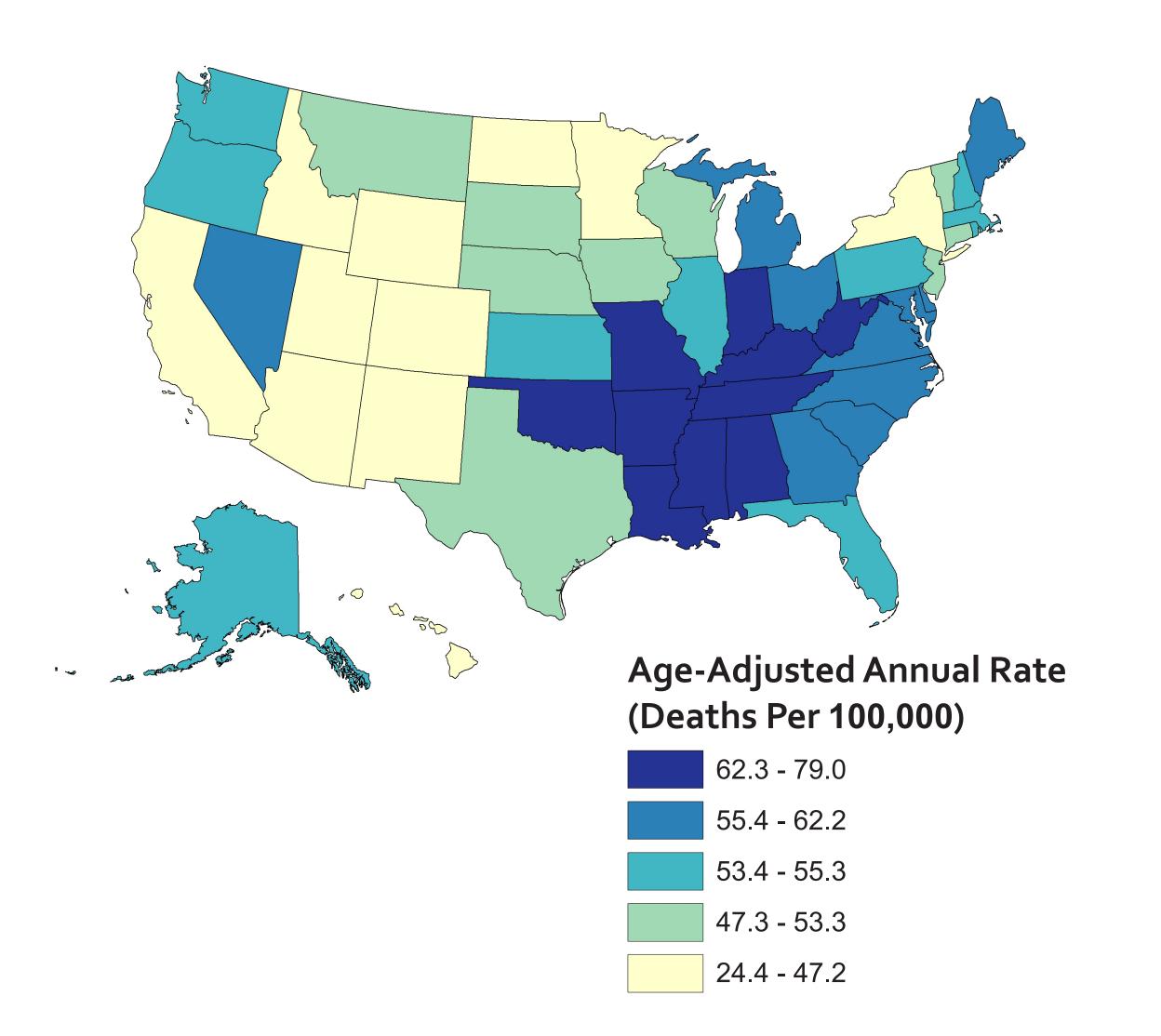
#### ADULTS WHO ARE CURRENT USERS



### BELIEF THAT SMOKING CAUSES CANCER



### LUNG AND BRONCHUS CANCER DEATHS



#### CONCLUSION

Gaps in health-related knowledge can create or exacerbate health disparities. By understanding the barriers to receiving important cancer prevention information, we can create effective communication strategies to correct misperceptions and increase protective behaviors.





