

Handout 3: Facts on Cognitive Decline

Types of dementia

Vascular dementia
Frontotemporal dementia
Alzheimer's disease
Dementia with Lewy bodies
Mixed dementia
Parkinson's disease dementia
Huntington's disease
Creutzfeldt–Jakob disease
Lewy body dementia
Normal pressure hydrocephalus
Korsakoff syndrome
Posterior cortical atrophy
Down syndrome and Alzheimer's disease
Young onset dementia
Alcohol-related dementia
Mild cognitive impairment
Mild dementia
Multi-infarct dementia

Statistics on dementia in the US

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about one in nine Americans 65 and older has dementia. Worse, nearly half of respondents ages 50 to 64 are worried about developing dementia, according to a National Poll on Healthy Aging. What's the difference between simple forgetfulness and incipient dementia?

According to a February 2025 study by NIH, ***Risk and future burden of dementia in the United States***, dementia affects more than 6 million Americans and accounts for more than 100,000 deaths each year. While previous estimates of lifetime dementia risk in the United States were 11-14% for men and 19-23% for women, these estimates are based on older data in which dementia wasn't reliably documented and early-stage cases were often missed. These data were also typically limited to non-Hispanic White populations.

Updated estimates by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health projected that the number of new dementia cases in the U.S. will double over the next four decades, from about 514,000 in 2020 to about 1 million in 2060.

The study suggests that the lifetime risk of dementia may be much higher than previously thought. This highlights an urgent need for policies that promote healthy aging. Interventions targeted toward high-risk individuals could help reduce the societal burdens of dementia.

Cost of Dementia

In the last five years of life, average out-of-pocket costs for older people with dementia are more than 80% higher than for older people without dementia (about \$62,000 versus \$34,000). Medicare covers the drugs and surgeries used to treat common conditions such as heart disease and cancer, but does not cover the cost of supervision and help with eating, dressing, and other daily activities, which are primarily what people with dementia need.^{[19](#)}

Researchers estimate that the cost of care in the last five years of life for someone with dementia averaged about \$287,000, significantly higher than the care costs for someone who died of heart disease (about \$175,000) or cancer (about \$173,000). Not only were care costs higher for people with dementia, but a larger share of those costs were not covered.²⁰
https://www.prb.org/resources/fact-sheet-u-s-dementia-trends/#_edn19

Families also spent a larger share of their assets on dementia care than on care for other conditions, 32% versus 11% of family assets, respectively, in the last five years of life.

(Jeanne) The costs of dementia vary by severity of the disease, the choice between aging at home with family, aging at home with home health aides, or aging in a facility with private home health aides. Location also affects cost. For my aunt living with dementia in Charlottesville, Virginia in a facility with round-the-clock privately paid home health aides, the cost was \$20,000 per month (\$240,000 per year). She died in 2022 at 102.