2021 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures

The number of Americans living with Alzheimer’s is growing — and growing fast.

• Today, more than 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s — 1 in 10 people aged 65 and older.

• The number of people living with Alzheimer’s is expected to more than double to nearly 13 million by 2050.

However, the burden of Alzheimer’s is not equally shared. Non-White populations experience barriers when accessing dementia care.

• Blacks are about two times more likely than white Americans to have Alzheimer’s and other dementias. Similarly, Hispanics are about one and one-half times more likely than whites to have Alzheimer’s and other dementias.

• Yet, two-thirds of Blacks believe that it is harder for them to get excellent care for Alzheimer’s, along with 40% of Native Americans and 39% of Hispanics.

• Fewer than half of Blacks and Native Americans feel confident they have access to providers who understand their ethnic or racial backgrounds.

• Additionally, 62% of Blacks believe that medical research is biased against people of color. This belief is also held by more than a third of Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics.
The growing number of people living with Alzheimer’s is placing a huge strain on the health care system.

- In 2021, the direct costs to American society of caring for those with Alzheimer’s will total an estimated $355 billion, with $239 billion of it (67%) paid by Medicare and Medicaid.

- Average per-person Medicare spending for those with Alzheimer’s and other dementias is more than three times higher than average per-person spending across all other seniors. Medicaid payments are 23 times higher.

- Unless something is done, in 2050, Alzheimer’s will cost more than $1.1 trillion (in 2021 dollars).

Alzheimer's also places a substantial burden on families.

- In 2020, family members and friends of individuals living with dementia provided unpaid care valued at nearly $257 billion.

- On average, each dementia caregiver today spends 20% more time providing care than a dementia caregiver did a decade ago. This is the equivalent of nearly six more full work weeks of unpaid care each year.

- Of the total lifetime cost of caring for someone with dementia, 70% is borne by families — either through out-of-pocket health and long-term care expenses or from the value of unpaid care.

- The annual out-of-pocket spending incurred by dementia caregivers — including on household and personal expenses — is nearly twice as high as that incurred by caregivers of people without dementia.

- Nearly three-fourths of dementia caregivers report that they are concerned about maintaining their own health since becoming a caregiver.

Facts in Your State

The 2021 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures report also contains state-by-state data on the impact of the disease. Find the full report and information on your state at alz.org/facts.