

FACTSHEET

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alzimpact.org

COVID-19 and Individuals with Alzheimer's

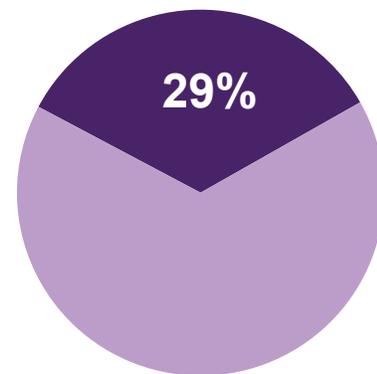
Individuals living with Alzheimer's have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- During the first 6 months of the pandemic, 8.8% of Medicare beneficiaries with dementia were diagnosed with COVID-19, compared with 2.4% of all Medicare beneficiaries.
- Overall, Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with Alzheimer's are 50% more likely to contract COVID-19 and 60% more likely to die from it, even after controlling for living arrangements, chronic conditions, and demographic factors.
- Through November 2021, nearly one-third of Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries hospitalized for COVID-19 also had a diagnosis of dementia.
- In 2020-2021, there were more than 55,700 more Alzheimer's and dementia deaths than expected based on the pre-pandemic five-year average.
- In 2020, the increase in deaths among Medicare beneficiaries with dementia was more than double the increase among Medicare beneficiaries without dementia.

Long-Term Care Recommendations

The Alzheimer's Association has issued a set of long-term care policy recommendations for federal and state policymakers to support individuals living with dementia during the COVID-19 pandemic. They focus on four areas: (1) testing, (2) reporting, (3) surge activation, and (4) providing support. To view these recommendations, visit alz.org/policy-covid19.

Percent of Medicare FFS COVID-19 Hospitalizations with a Dementia Diagnosis Through November 2021



In addition, COVID-19 poses unique challenges for people with dementia and their families.

- Caregivers may receive less or irregular outside assistance, adding to already-high levels of caregiver strain.
- Persons living with dementia may have an impaired ability to follow or remember instructions on social distancing and other best practices, thus increasing their risk of contracting COVID-19.
- People living with dementia may have difficulty adapting to disrupted routines. Wandering, confusion, and disorientation may increase.
- Cognitive impairment may impede communicating, especially virtually, therefore contributing to social isolation and potentially causing more rapid cognitive decline.