



AGING WITH DEMENTIA IN DIVERSE COMMUNITIES Asian Americans

Cecilia S Han, Ph.D. ABPP-CN

Alzheimer's Association Volunteer - Community Educator

Prevalence

- An estimated 6.7 million Americans ≥ 65 are living with Alzheimer's in 2023 – About 1 in 9 people ≥ 65 (10.7%) has Alzheimer's Disease (Alzheimer's Association, 2023).
- While Asian Americans are underrepresented in the prevalence study of dementia, the actual prevalence rate is believed to be at least equivalent to the general population in the U.S. (Chen, Borson, & Scanlan, 2000).
- An epidemiologic study conducted in China assessed a total of 10,276 individuals ≥ 65 and found 2137 (21%) met criteria for Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) and 528 (5%) met criteria for dementia (Jia et al., 2014).

Assessment Tools

- MRI/CT
- PET/SPECT
- EEG/Polysomnography
- Lab
- Lumbar Puncture
- Specialty Care
 - Neurology
 - Geriatric Medicine/Gerontology
 - Psychiatry
- Cognitive Assessment
 - Neuropsychology

*Imaging and labs are not definitive. Ongoing effort in research to identify biomarkers to assist with diagnosis.

Barriers of Assessment and Diagnosis

- Lack of accessibility to health care and cultural competency of healthcare providers (including application and management of health insurance)
- Misconception or inadequate awareness/understanding of cognitive impairment and dementia (including stigma and discrimination)
- Language/linguistic limitations: limited English proficiency
- Heterogeneity of Asian populations (51 countries; >2300 languages)
- Extreme differences in educational levels and quality
- Paucity of culturally sensitive measures and normative standards
- Culturally inappropriate translation of tests
- Concurrent psychiatric and/or physical symptoms with cognitive impairment

Recommendations

- Enhance cultural competency/sensitivity of healthcare providers
- Community education – warning signs, assessment and management of symptoms
- Increase public awareness and adequate understanding
- Develop culturally sensitive assessment tools



Resources

- **Alzheimer's Association**
 - Website: <https://alz.org/asian/overview.asp?nL=ZH&dL=ZH>
 - 24/7 Helpline: 1(800) 272-3900
- 大華府社區健康服務中心 – Chinese American Community Health Services (CACHS)
 - 網址: <https://www.cachs.org/>
 - 服務熱線: (普通話/廣東話) (240) 658-9228 / (571) 668-5836
- 美京華人活動中心 – Chinese Culture and Community Service Center
 - 網址: https://www.ccacc-dc.org/Default_en.aspx
 - 服務熱線: (301) 820-7200
- 한국 어르신들을 위한 특수 병동 – Lorien Health Services: Korean Senior Care
 - 웹사이트: <https://www.lorienhealth.com/services-offered/korean-senior-care>
 - 전화 번호: (443) 761-1444