

factsheet

JUNE 2016

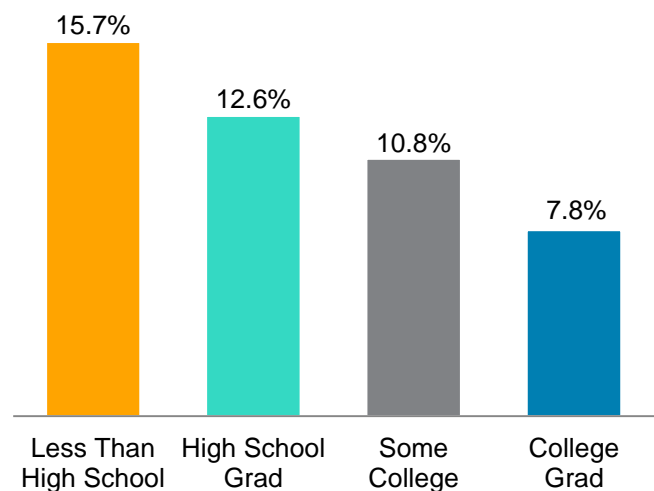
alz.org

Cognitive Data from the 2013 BRFSS

One in nine Americans aged 45 and older report experiencing confusion or memory loss that is happening more often or is getting worse (“subjective cognitive decline”).

- Data from 19 states show that 11.1 percent of Americans aged 45 and over have subjective cognitive decline.
- African Americans are 31 percent more likely than whites and 40 percent more likely than Hispanics to have subjective cognitive decline.
- Individuals with lower levels of education are more likely to have subjective cognitive decline. Of those who did not graduate from high school, 15.7 percent have subjective cognitive decline compared with 7.8 percent of college graduates.
- Among those with subjective cognitive decline, 25.4 percent live alone.

Subjective Cognitive Decline Among Those Aged 45 and Over By Education Level



Those with subjective cognitive decline often have several additional health issues beyond their increasing memory problems.

- Eighty percent of those with subjective cognitive decline have at least one other chronic condition (arthritis, asthma, COPD, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and/or diabetes).
- Nearly half say that, in general, they are in fair or poor health.
- Of those individuals with subjective cognitive decline, 36.6 percent spent at least 14 days in the last month in poor physical health.

What is the BRFSS?

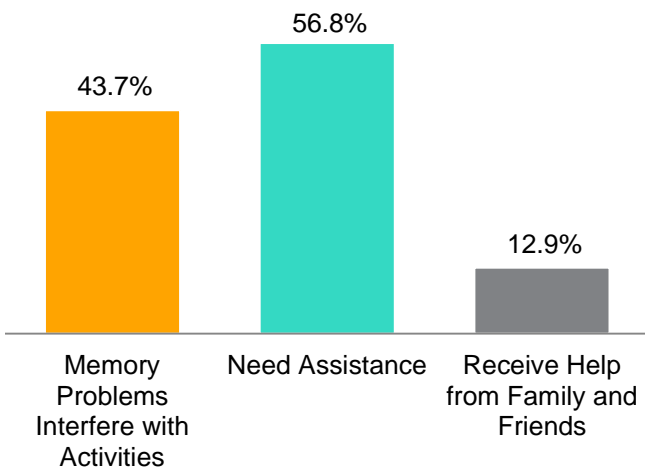
The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a public health survey conducted each year by all states, in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The data presented here come from the 2013 BRFSS Cognitive Module – a series of 10 questions that ask about memory problems, the burden of cognitive decline, and whether memory problems have been discussed with a health care professional. All data were analyzed by the CDC’s Healthy Aging Program.

For a large proportion of those with subjective cognitive decline, it negatively affects their ability to function.

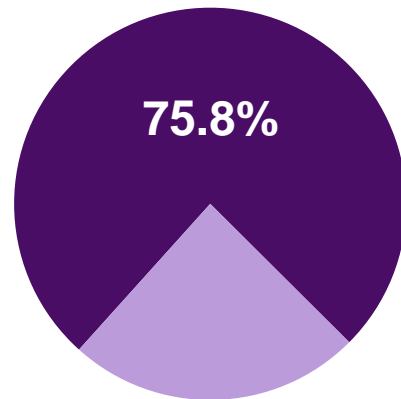
- Over 40 percent of adults aged 45 and older with subjective cognitive decline report that it has created “functional difficulties” – this is, it has caused them to give up household activities or chores, or has interfered with their ability to work, volunteer or engage in social activities.
- Over half say that because of their worsening memory problems they need assistance on at least one routine activity, such as household activities, personal care and transportation.
- For 12.9 percent, the difficulties have reached the point that they always or usually receive help on care or assistance from family and friends.

Percent with Subjective Cognitive Decline Who Say It Creates Difficulties and Burden



This Fact Sheet is supported by Cooperative Agreement #NU58DP0016115 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the Alzheimer's Association and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

Percent with Subjective Cognitive Decline Who Have Not Talked to a Health Care Provider



Most are not talking about their memory problems with a health care professional.

- Of those aged 45 and older with subjective cognitive decline, more than 75 percent have not talked to a health care provider about it.
- More than 80 percent of those aged 60 and older have not had this discussion with a health care professional.

What Is “Subjective Cognitive Decline”?

“Subjective cognitive decline” refers to those who report that, in the previous 12 months, they have experienced confusion or memory loss that is happening more often or is getting worse. While some of these individuals may have mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or be in the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, “subjective cognitive decline” does not measure the prevalence of any medical condition. Rather, it measures the prevalence of those who self-report they are having increasing memory problems. A growing body of evidence shows that subjective cognitive decline is one of the earliest warning signs of Alzheimer’s and other dementias and indicates a higher risk of developing the disease.