

FACTSHEET

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Veterans and Alzheimer's Disease

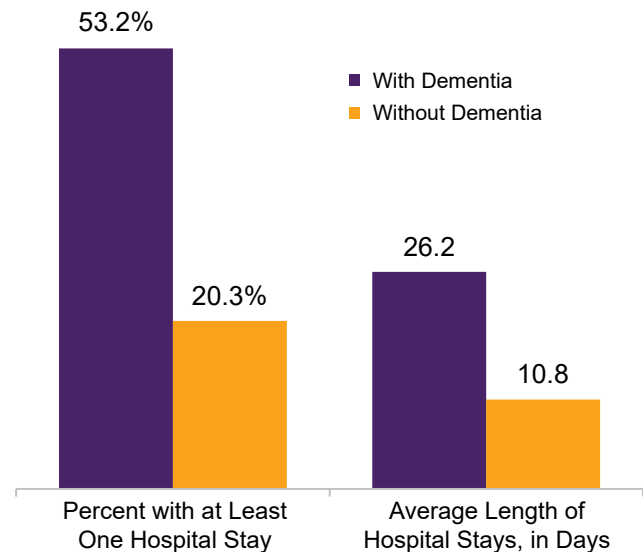
Nearly half a million American veterans have Alzheimer's — and as the population ages, that number is expected to grow.

- In 2022, an estimated 451,000 veterans were living with Alzheimer's dementia and more than 130,000 new cases were diagnosed.
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has projected the number of veterans living with Alzheimer's dementia will increase by 8.4% through 2033 to more than 488,000.

Veterans may be uniquely exposed to certain risk factors for Alzheimer's and other dementias, driving high prevalence.

- Evidence indicates that even mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) increases the risk of developing certain forms of dementia. A 2023 meta-analysis estimated the increase in dementia risk from any form of TBI was nearly 70%.
- Between 2000-2024, active U.S. Department of Defense personnel experienced more than 66,000 moderate or severe cases of TBI — and more than 514,000 cases of TBI of any kind.
- More than one in five combat wounds from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq involved brain injury.
- Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has also been linked to an increased risk of dementia and is two to five times more common in veterans compared with the general population.

Hospitalizations Among Veterans With and Without Dementia



The large increase in the number of veterans with Alzheimer's and other dementias will place a heavy burden on the VA health care system.

- Veterans with dementia are 2.6 times more likely to be hospitalized than other veterans — and hospital stays are, on average, 2.4 times longer.
- The average number of outpatient psychiatric visits is three times greater among veterans with dementia than veterans without.
- More than 60% of the VA's costs of caring for those with Alzheimer's are for nursing home care.