INTRODUCTION

- Declines in cognitive functioning impede maintenance of a healthy, active, and independent lifestyle.
- Net cost of care for the most severe cognitive declines (i.e. dementia) was nearly twice (1.75 times) as much as the costs of care for a person without dementia. 1
- Alzheimer’s Disease impacted 6.2 million older Americans in 2021. 2 Alzheimer’s diagnoses are estimated to grow to 13.8 million by 2060.
- As rates of dementia in the U.S. are estimated to increase, it is necessary to explore potential contributing factors of cognitive decline in order to establish preventative measures.
- The aim of this study was to determine the association between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and Subjective Cognitive Decline (SCD).

METHODS

- Data was obtained from the 2019 and 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (N=18,096; ≥45 yrs).
- We assessed accumulation of ACEs and their association with SCD, and among individuals reporting only one ACE, we used logistic regression to compare the likelihood reporting SCD and symptomology among the 8 categories of adversity.

RESULTS

- Among included respondents, 10.14% reported experiencing SCD.
- More ACEs were reported among those with SCD (M=2.61, SD=2.56) compared to those without SCD (M=1.44, SD=1.91).
- Those with higher ACEs scores were significantly less likely to have spoken with a healthcare provider about their cognitive decline.
- Individuals reporting 1 ACE of either family mental illness, family substance abuse, family incarceration, emotional abuse, or physical abuse had significantly greater odds of reporting memory loss compared to individuals with no ACEs.

Table 1. ACE Domains

1. Family Mental Illness
2. Substance Abuse in the Household
3. Incarcerated Family Member
4. Parental Separation or Divorce
5. Intimate Partner Violence
6. Emotional Abuse
7. Physical Abuse
8. Sexual Abuse

CONCLUSION

- Individuals reporting only 1 ACE of sexual abuse were less likely to discuss cognitive impairment with their physician.
- Individuals aged 55-64 years old were at the greatest risk of reporting cognitive decline symptoms.
- This finding supports screening interventions for individuals who may be at an increased risk of developing cognitive decline.
- Among individuals being treated for chronic conditions where early childhood trauma has occurred, screening may need to be done earlier.
- Intervention and preventative programs targeting ACEs may lower the incidence and prevalence of SCD in future generations.

REFERENCES