

FC04-02

SELF- PERCEIVED HEALTH AND ALZHEIMER DISEASE INCIDENCE RISK. DATA FROM A POPULATION BASED COHORT IN SPAIN: NEDICES STUDY

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Background: Self-perceived health is a well-recognised predictor of later health outcomes and mortality, but its relationship to incident dementia has been scarcely explored.

Objective: To analyze self- perceived health as a risk factor for dementia and Alzheimer disease (AD) in a population- based survey of the elderly (NEDICES) Study.

Methods: Participants were evaluated at baseline (1994-1995) with a standardized questionnaire that included subjective and objective (chronic disorders) health status and screening questions for depression and neurologic disorders. At follow-up (a median of 3.2 years later in 1997-1998) an analogous protocol and neurological assessment were performed.

Results: Of 5,278 participants evaluated at baseline there were 306 prevalent dementia cases, and 161 incident dementia cases were identified among 3,891 individuals assessed at follow-up (D: 115).

Cox hazard ratio analyses showed that age, stroke and illiteracy were independent risk factors for dementia and AD. Aggregation of vascular risk factors was related to a higher risk of both dementia and AD. Good (and very good) versus less than good (fair, bad and very bad) self-perceived health was an independent risk factor for dementia (CI 95% 1.13- 2.16; p= .006) and AD (CI 95% 1.02- 2.18; p= .038) after adjusting by age, sex education and vascular risk factors.

Discussion: Self-perceived health increased the risk for incident dementia and AD in the NEDICES cohort as it was previously described in the United Kindom MRC- CFA Study of dementia incidence. Global health measurements (self-perceived health, quality of life) needs farther studies as risk for dementia and AD.