

# FACTSHEET

MARCH 2023

alzimpact.org

## Veterans and Alzheimer's Disease

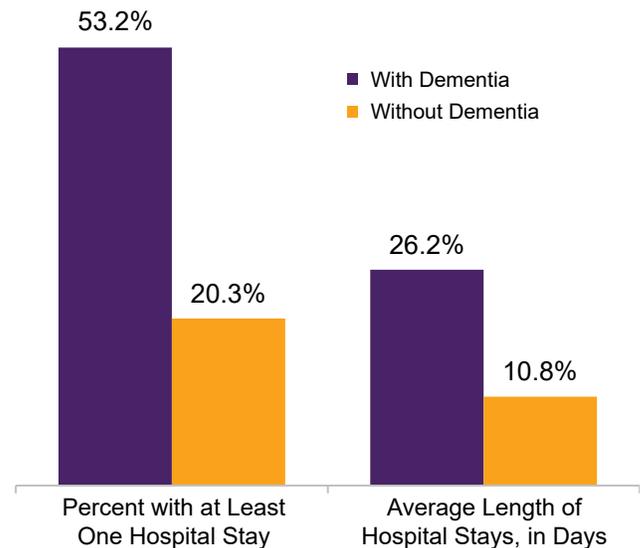
**Nearly half a million American veterans have Alzheimer's — and as the population ages, that number is expected to grow.**

- 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 has projected the number of veterans living with Alzheimer's dementia will increase by 8.4% in 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 recent meta-analysis estimated the increase in dementia risk from any form of TBI was nearly 70%.
- Between 2000-2022, U.S. military personnel experienced more than 62,000 moderate or severe cases of TBI. More than 468,000 cases of any form of TBI were recorded.
- More than 1 in 5 combat wounds from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq involved brain injuries.
- 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.