

December 2023

Subjective Cognitive Decline in Georgia





BACKGROUND

In 2020, more than 7 million Americans aged 65 and older had dementia. If current demographic and health trends continue, more than 9 million Americans could have dementia by 2030 and nearly 12 million by 2040¹.

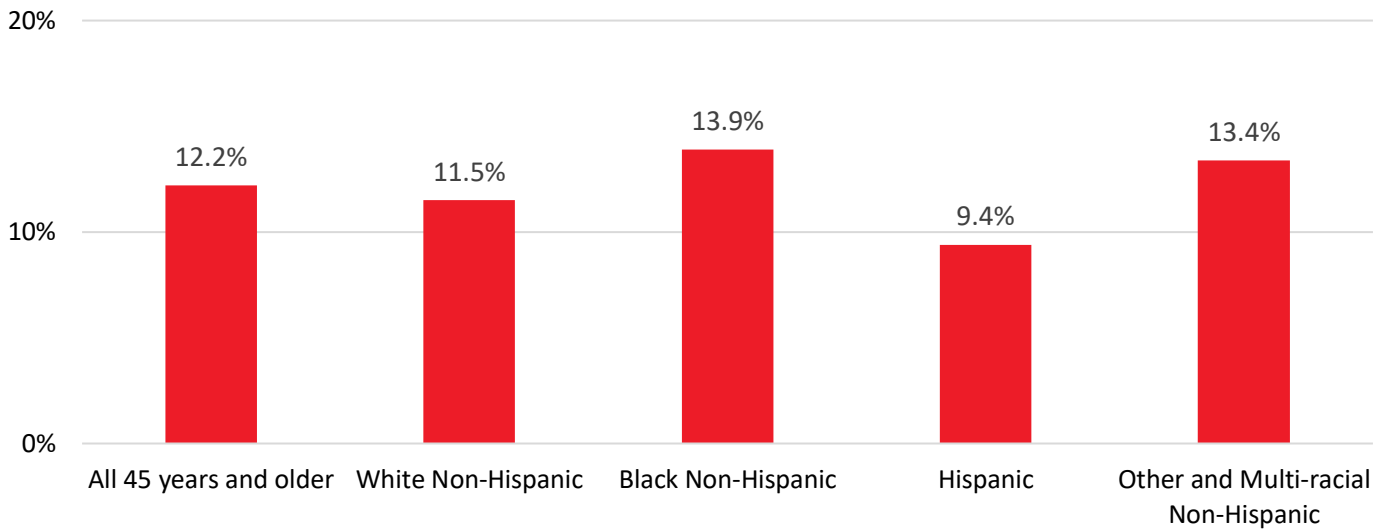


GEORGIA 2021

Cognition is a combination of processes in the brain that includes the ability to learn, remember, and make judgments². Cognitive decline refers to difficulty remembering, concentrating, learning new things, or making decisions that affect everyday life. **Subjective cognitive decline (SCD) is a self-reported experience of cognitive decline and can be one of the earliest noticeable symptoms of dementia².**

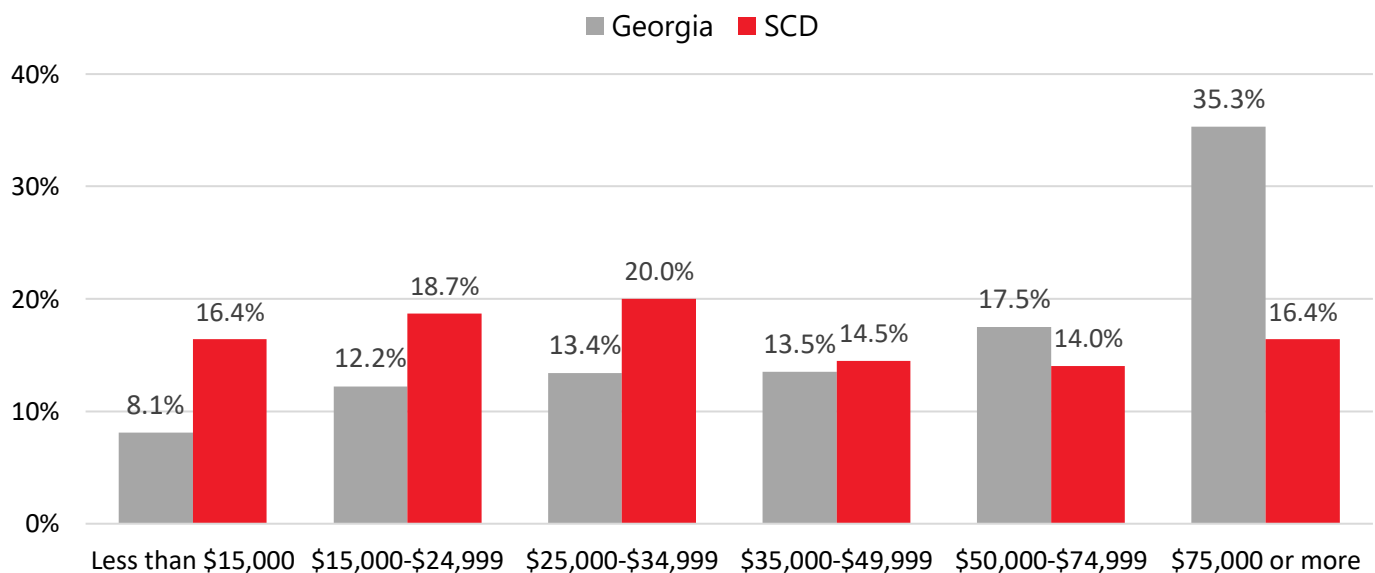
The growing older adult population in Georgia increases the need for health services for older adults. The following information about Georgians 45 years and older experiencing SCD may help prepare individuals (including older adults and their family and friends) for the impacts of SCD and public health professionals to mitigate the impacts of SCD and dementia in our population.

Prevalence of Subjective Cognitive Decline (SCD) among Adults 45 Years and Older, Georgia, 2021



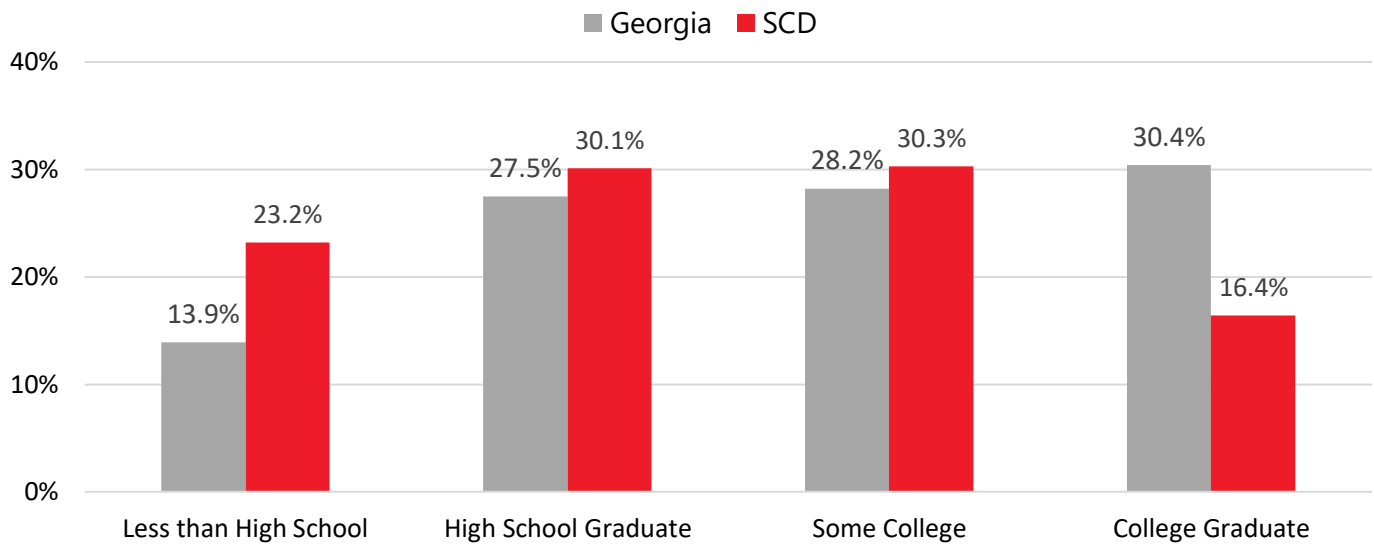
12.2% of adults aged 45 years and older in Georgia reported experiencing SCD. Race/ethnicity can influence the risk of SCD. The prevalence of SCD among adults aged 45 years and older in Georgia was highest among Black non-Hispanics (13.9%).

Income among Persons with SCD vs. Georgians 45 Years and Older, Georgia, 2021



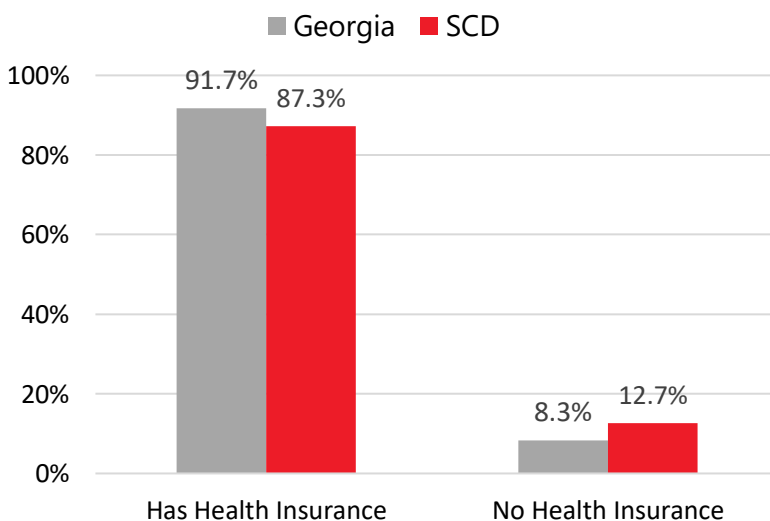
There were more Georgians with income less than \$50,000 among those experiencing SCD than the overall Georgia population 45 years and older.

Education among Persons with SCD vs. Georgians 45 Years and Older, Georgia, 2021



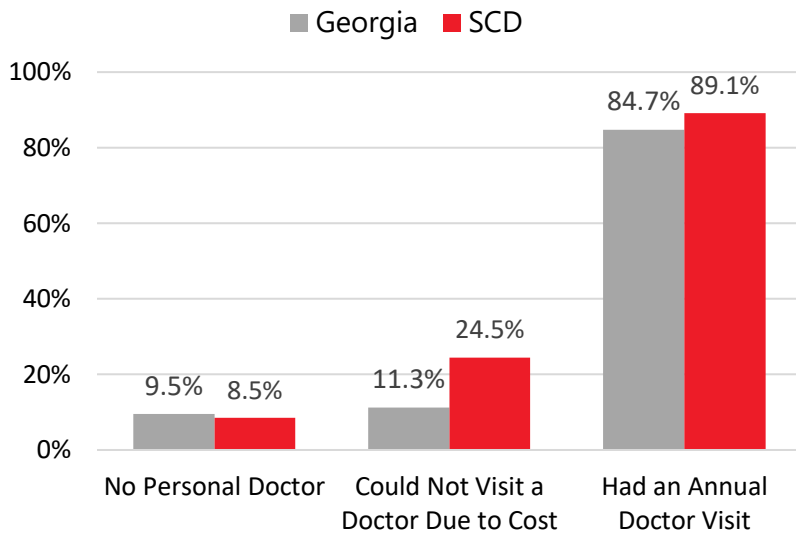
More education is associated with lower risk of cognitive decline. There were more Georgians with some college, high school, and less than high school education among those experiencing SCD than the overall Georgia population 45 years and older.

Health Insurance among Persons with SCD vs. Georgians 45 Years and Older, Georgia, 2021



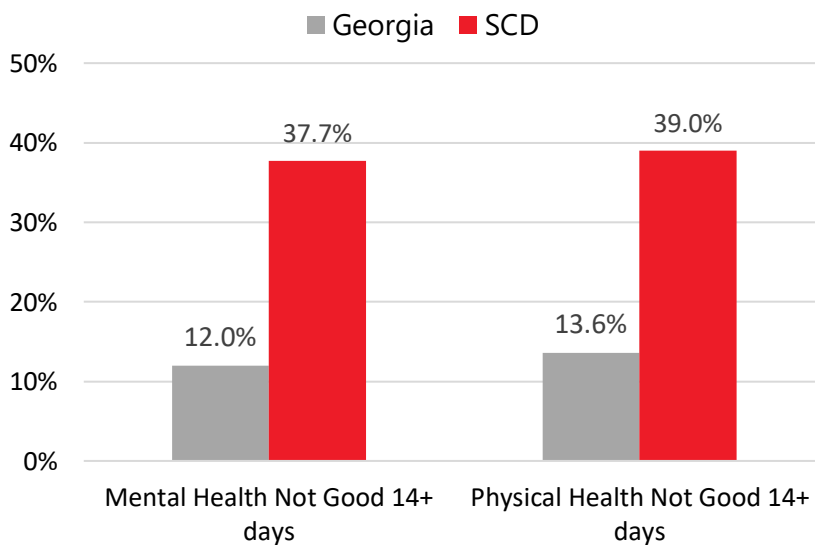
12.7% of Georgians experiencing SCD did not have health insurance. This is higher than the 8.3% in the Georgia population 45 years and older.

Healthcare Access among Persons with SCD vs. Georgians 45 Years and Older, Georgia, 2021



24.5% of adults aged 45 years and older in Georgia experiencing SCD reported they could not visit a doctor due to cost in the last 12 months. This percentage is more than twice as high than among all Georgians 45 years and older.

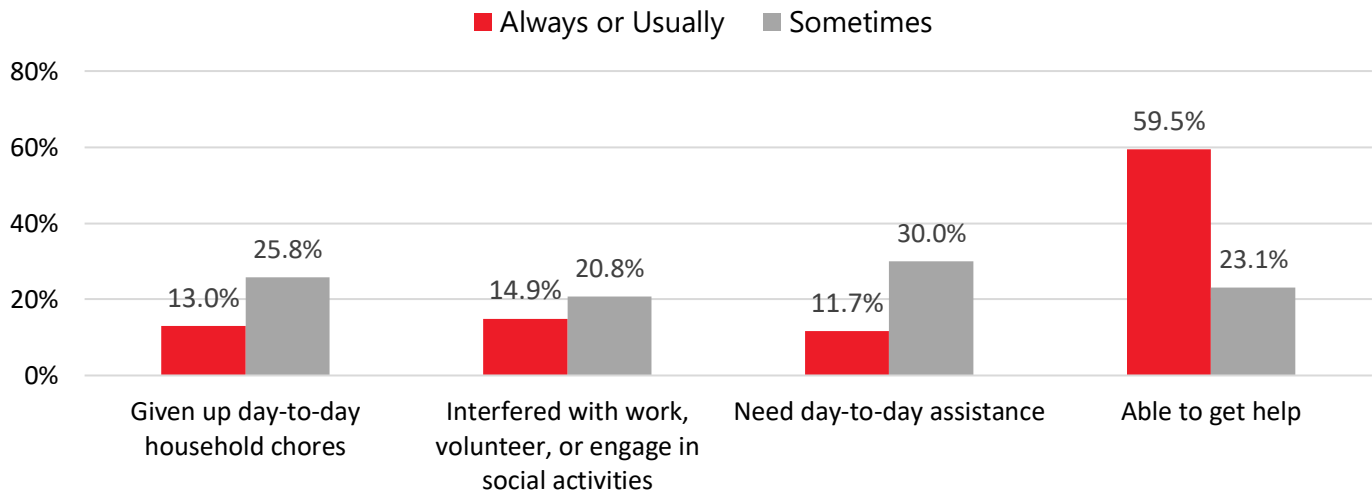
Health & Well-being among Persons with SCD vs. Georgians 45 Years and Older, Georgia, 2021



The percentage of adults 45 years and older experiencing SCD and who reported not having good mental health or physical health for the last 14+ days was three times higher than among all Georgians 45 years and older.

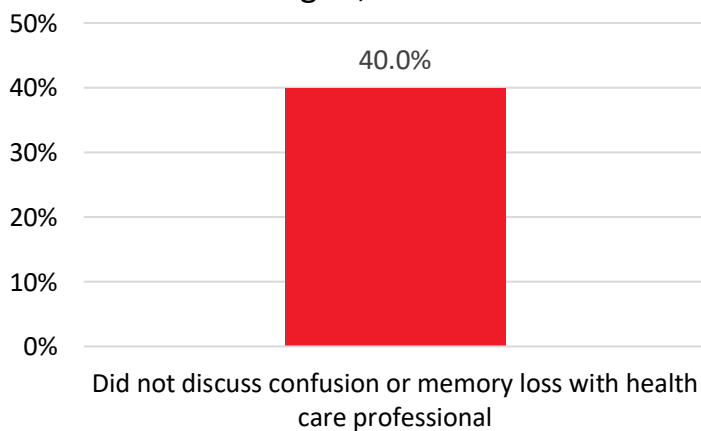
SCD impacts an individual's life beyond thinking and remembering. It may interfere with the ability to engage in typical activities such as socializing, driving, cooking, taking medications, and working².

SCD-Related Functional Difficulties among Persons 45 Years and Older with SCD, Georgia, 2021



Overall, over a third of adults aged 45 years and older reported always, usually, or sometimes giving up on day-to-day household chores, interference in engaging in activities outside the home and needing day-to-day assistance with daily activities due to experiencing SCD.

Discussing Confusion and Memory Loss among Persons with SCD, Adults 45 Years or Older, Georgia, 2021



40% of Georgia adults aged 45 years and older with SCD reported they have not discussed confusion or memory loss with a health care professional.



10 EARLY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEMENTIA³

1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks
4. Confusion with time or place
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
8. Decreased or poor judgment
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities
10. Changes in mood and personality



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage Georgians 45 and older to discuss symptoms of cognitive decline with healthcare professionals.
2. Encourage healthcare professionals to recommend and conduct cognitive screening for adults 45 and older.
3. Address gaps in healthcare access for older adults with SCD who could not visit a doctor due to cost.
4. Provide mental health support for older adults to improve mental wellbeing.



LINKS TO RESOURCES

Georgia

Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia: <https://dph.georgia.gov/AlzheimersDisease>

Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services:
<https://aging.georgia.gov/programs-and-services>

United States

Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org

CDC Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease:
<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/aginginfo/alzheimers.htm>

CDC- Healthy Brain Initiative: Alzheimer's Disease – Aging:
<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/healthybrain/index.htm>

National Institute on Aging: www.nia.nih.gov

Family Caregiver Alliance: www.caregiving.org



REFERENCES

Data source: 2021 Georgia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

1. Zissimopoulos, J. M. et al (2018). The Impact of Changes in Population Health and Mortality on Future Prevalence of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias in the United States. The journals of gerontology. Series B, Psychological sciences and social sciences, 73(suppl_1), S38–S47.
2. CDC (2019). Subjective Cognitive Decline – A Public Health Issue.
<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/data/subjective-cognitive-decline-brief.html>
3. Alzheimer's Association (2023). www.alz.org

