



# Investigating the Characteristics of Middle-Aged and Older Adults Who Do and Do Not Seek Memory Screenings

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## Introduction

- Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) can result in significant cognitive decline as the diseases progress. Given that early detection of ADRD is essential for an individual's future planning (Hodgson & Cutler, 2004), investigating characteristics of individuals who display help-seeking behavior is vital.
- The present study hypothesized that participants who sought memory screenings would report significantly 1) higher dementia-related anxiety, 2) lower anticipated ADRD stigma, and 3) higher self-perceived ADRD risk compared to participants who did not receive memory screenings.

## Methods

### Participants

#### Memory Screening (N = 25) Non-Memory Screening (N = 25)

Recruited from UCCS Aging Clinic or Participant Registry

- Gender: Female (N = 31), Male (N = 19)
- Age (58 – 79):  $M = 70.92$ ,  $SD = 6.08$
- Education (Yrs. Post-Kindergarten):  $M = 15.92$ ,  $SD = 2.21$
- Self-Perceived Physical Health:  $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 1.02$

### Materials

- Memory screening lasting approx. 2 hr. including 30 - 40 min of testing, 20 - 30 min break, and a cognitive functioning review by a licensed clinical psychologist and graduate student.
- In-person interview lasting approx. 30 min that assessed the participants knowledge, thoughts, and feelings about ADRD (15 questions).

### Questionnaire Packet

- 12-item Dementia-related anxiety scale
- 7-item Anticipated ADRD scale
- Self-perceived ADRD risk inquiry
- Demographics Page

## Methods cont'd

### Procedure

- 1) Memory Screening participants received a memory screening prior to recruitment.
- 2) Participants arrived at their individual appointments.
- 3) Participants gave informed consent.
- 4) Participants completed a counterbalanced in-person interview and questionnaire packet.
- 5) Participants were debriefed and compensated 20 USD.
- 6) Referrals were given upon participant request.

## T-Test Analyses

Table 1

T-Test results comparing memory screening and non-memory screening groups

	Memory Screening	Non-Memory Screening	Mean Difference	t	df	p
	M SD	M SD				
DWS	1.84 (0.70)	1.60 (0.59)	.24	1.334	48	.189
ACS	2.35 (0.49)	2.37 (0.70)	-.02	-0.167	48	.868
Self-perceived Risk	2.83 (1.13)	2.28 (0.84)	.55	1.95	47	.057

- Memory screening participants' dementia-related anxiety ( $M = 1.84$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ) was not significantly different than non-memory screening participants ( $M = 1.60$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ),  $t(48) = 1.334$ ,  $p = .189$ .
- Memory screening participants' anticipated ADRD stigma ( $M = 2.35$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ) did not significantly differ from non-memory screening participants ( $M = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ),  $t(48) = -0.167$ ,  $p = .868$ .
- Memory screening participants' ( $M = 2.83$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ) self-perceived ADRD risk was somewhat greater than non-memory screening participants ( $M = 2.28$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ), but did not reach statistical significance  $t(47) = 1.95$ ,  $p = .057$ .

## Pearson's Correlation ( $p \leq .01$ )

Table 2

Pearson Correlations among both Groups

Variables	Memory Screening			Non-Memory Screening		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
1. DWS Mean	---	---	---	---	---	---
2. ACS Mean	.210	---	---	.524*	---	---
3. Self-perceived Risk	.765*	.326	---	.319	.329	---

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

- Strong positive correlation between self-perceived ADRD risk and dementia-related anxiety for memory screening participants,  $r = 0.765$ ,  $p = .000$ .
- Strong positive correlation between anticipated ADRD stigma and dementia-related anxiety for non-memory screening participants,  $r = 0.524$ ,  $p = .007$ .

## Discussion

- Overall, t-test analyses suggest that dementia-related anxiety, anticipated ADRD stigma, and self-perceived ADRD risk do not appear to be associated with help-seeking behavior.
- Correlational analyses suggest that individuals who report high dementia-related anxiety and high self-perceived ADRD risk may be more likely to seek memory screenings. Whereas individuals who report high dementia-related anxiety and high anticipation of ADRD stigma may be less likely to seek memory screenings.
- Possible limitations to generalizability include prevalent small sample size and a potential lack of a "true" control.
- Future investigation of these relationships may help understand motivators and barriers to memory screening, and possibly promote early detection in middle-aged and older adults.