

Incidence and Risk factors for AD/ADRD among American Indian and Alaska Native U.S Veterans

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BACKGROUND & AIM

- Racial and ethnic disparities in AD/ADRD incidence are well-documented, yet American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) adults remain critically understudied.
- Our aim was to examine AD/ADRD incidence and risk factors among older AI/AN Veterans receiving VHA care.**

METHODS

Participants: 31,341 AI/AN Veterans aged ≥55 yrs receiving VHA care (FY2005–2010) with a propensity score-matched NHW comparison group.

Outcome: AD/ADRD incidence (FY2011–2023) identified via ICD-9/10 codes.

Analysis: Age-adjusted incidence rates (direct standardization); Cox proportional hazards regression adjusted for age and sex; Fine-Gray models used in sensitivity analyses to account for competing risk of death.

- 16% AI/AN Veterans developed AD/ADRD over 9.3 years.
- Age-adjusted incidence per 1000 person years:
 - AI/AN: 19.0; 95% CI, 18.5–19.5
 - NHW: 16.2; 95% CI, 16.0–16.5
- The risk was highest in youngest and oldest age AI/AN groups (Figure 1).
- Vascular conditions, traumatic brain injury, posttraumatic stress disorder, and depression were associated with risk of dementia among AI/AN Veterans (Figure 2).

DISCUSSION & TAKEAWAY

These findings highlight a **higher burden of AD/ADRD among AI/AN Veterans with multiple modifiable vascular, psychiatric, and military-related risk factors contributing to risk.** Targeted prevention intervention strategies addressing these factors are needed to reduce AD/ADRD in this underserved population.

RESULTS

Figure 1. Age-stratified incident rate ratios of AD/ADRD.

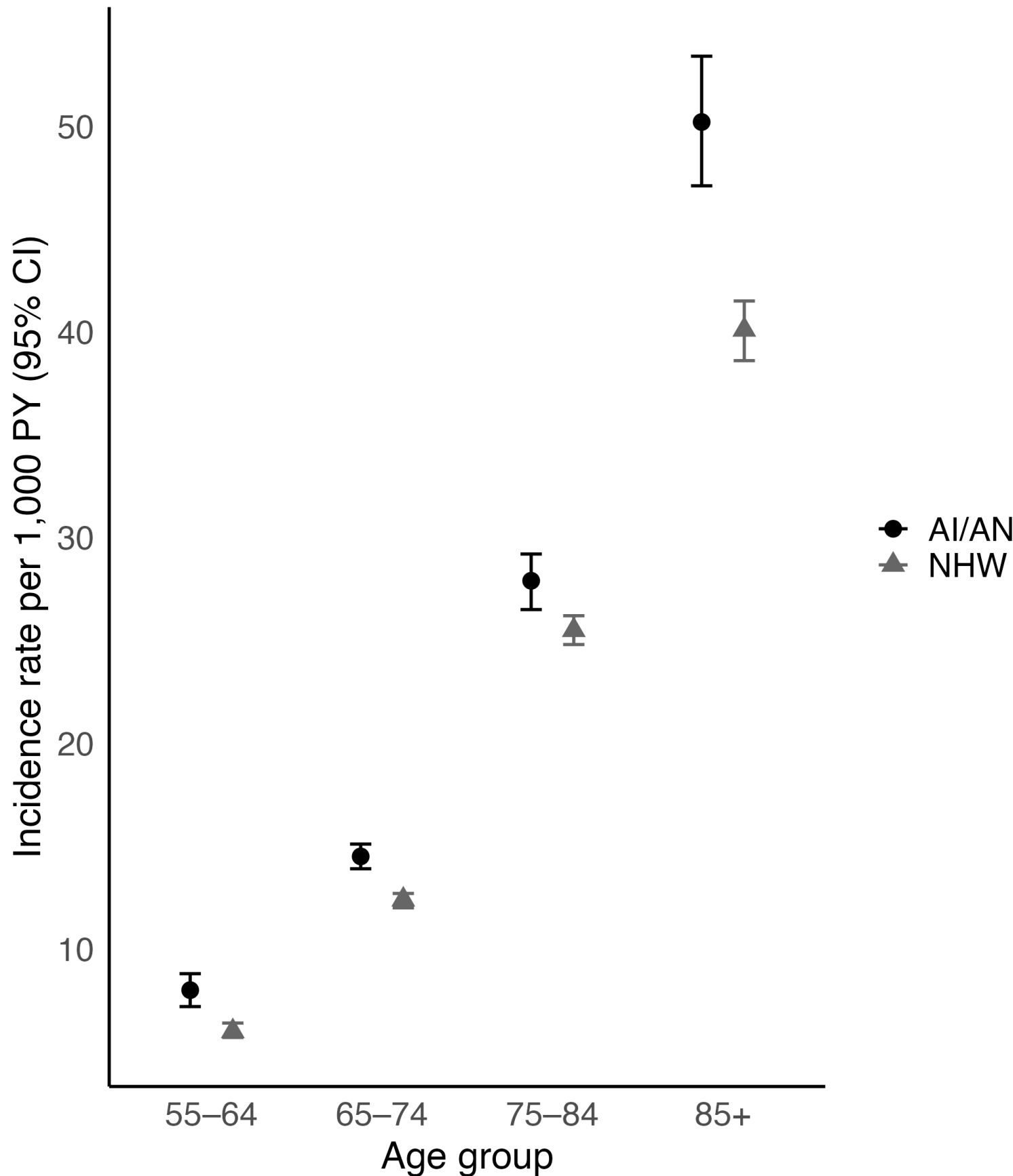


Figure 2. Risk factors of AD/ADRD in older AI/AN Veterans (n=31,341).

