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WebMD And Shriver Media Survey Sheds New Light On Our Understanding Of And Response To The Growing Alzheimer's Epidemic

Despite heightened awareness of the disease, apathy, fear and a limited understanding of options leave most unprepared for the physical, emotional and financial toll.

While 96 percent of respondents have heard of Alzheimer's, nearly half are not concerned about getting the disease. Only 11 percent have asked their doctors about preventing Alzheimer's.

Two in three Alzheimer's cases are in women, but most people believe men are the most affected group or both genders are diagnosed equally.

Millennials most likely to be "caregivers on deck" for family diagnosed with the disease, but they are the least likely to be financially prepared.

NEW YORK and LOS ANGELES, Feb. 25, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- The majority of respondents are aware of Alzheimer's disease but have not taken steps to learn about their personal risk or to prepare for its associated financial burden, according to the results of a new WebMD and Shriver Media survey. The findings are part of the newly released **WebMD and Shriver Report Snapshot: Insight into Alzheimer's Attitudes and Behaviors**, a comprehensive look at our conflicted feelings about the only disease among the top 10 causes of death in America that cannot be prevented or cured. The survey also finds that most people do not understand who is at greatest risk for diagnosis - with just one-third correctly reporting that Alzheimer's afflicts more women than men, or that the disease more often strikes African-Americans and Hispanics than whites.

Experience the interactive Multimedia News Release here: <http://www.multivu.com/players/English/7579751-webmd-shriver-media-alzheimer-s-survey/>

Insight into Alzheimer's Attitudes and Behaviors

96%

have heard of
Alzheimer's

76%

know the symptoms

34%

are concerned
about getting
Alzheimer's

**Less than 4 in 10 know about treatment options.
And only 11% have asked their doctors
about preventing the disease.**

67%

want to know their risk
for getting the disease

**Most want
to know their
risk but
aren't taking
steps to
find out.**

but

41%

when offered ways
to find out their risk
said they would not
do any of them

2 in 3

say Alzheimer's related costs
could cause their family great
financial harm

**NEARLY
HALF**

have never considered
the financial implications

what we
know



90% know it can
strike people
in their 40s



89% know it is not a
normal part of aging



**People know
a lot about
Alzheimer's
disease but don't
know who gets it
or what to do
about it.**

what we
don't know



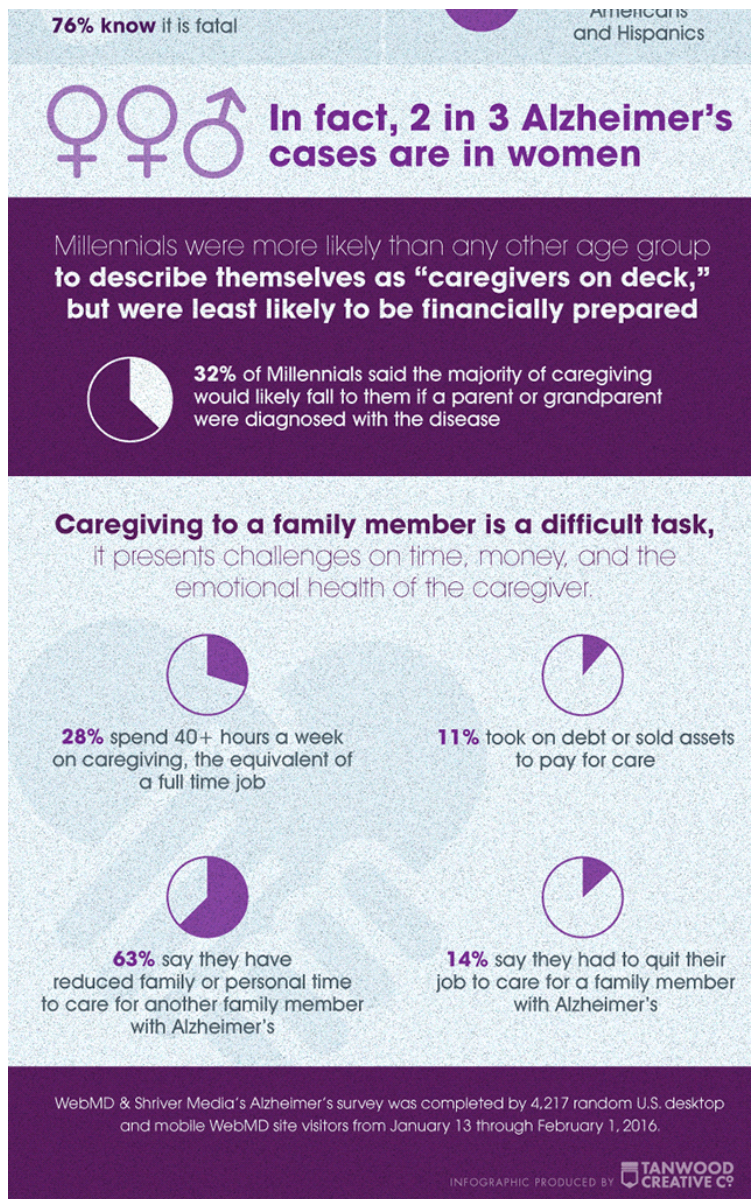
64% didn't know
that more women are
diagnosed than men



49% didn't know
that a woman in her
60s is more likely
to get Alzheimer's
than breast cancer



67% didn't know
it is more likely to
strike African
Americans



Despite a majority of respondents (78%) who said they know or have known someone with Alzheimer's - and nearly 1 in 5 (18%) who have cared for someone with Alzheimer's - many acknowledged that they have not taken steps to assess their own risk of getting the disease or to prepare for the financial implications of becoming a caregiver.

The results of the survey were disclosed last night in Los Angeles during Maria Shriver's [Architects of Change conversation](http://mariashriver.com/blog/category/architects-of-change/) [http://mariashriver.com/blog/category/architects-of-change/] with Seth and Lauren Miller Rogen, founders of Hilarity for Charity, a movement to inspire change and raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease among the millennial generation.

Conducted between January 13 and February 1, 2016, the survey of 4,217 consumers offers an in-depth look at attitudes toward Alzheimer's, shedding new light on the significant gap that exists between awareness and action.

Michael W. Smith, MD, MBA, CPT, Medical Director and Chief Medical Editor, WebMD

"It's incredibly tough to think about losing your mind or watching a loved one struggle with Alzheimer's," said Michael Smith, MD, WebMD chief medical editor. "There is great concern about the impact of this disease, but denial, fear or other unknown factors seem to be preventing us from taking the necessary steps to prepare. With her legacy of advocacy on behalf of this disease, Maria Shriver and Shriver Media were the perfect partners for us to embark on this exploration into Alzheimer's, and I couldn't be more pleased to be sharing these results together."

Maria Shriver, Founder, Shriver Media and the Women's Alzheimer's Challenge

"I'm honored to partner with WebMD who provides great insight and actionable information that people trust to uncover these facts," says Maria Shriver. "Alzheimer's is not a natural part of aging. It claims a new person every 67 seconds, the

majority of whom are women. This poll and the facts contained in it should shake us all out of denial. This is a disease that affects all of us. And it will take all of us to beat it. The WebMD-Shriver Report Snapshot: Insight into Alzheimer's Attitudes and Behaviors has the facts and I'm hopeful it will ignite the fight in all of us to find the cure. I've spent 13 years working on this issue, and I'm heartened that now more people than ever know about it, but enough awareness, we now need action."

To read the full WebMD and Shriver Report Snapshot: Insight into Alzheimer's Attitudes and Behaviors, providing additional data [and expert perspectives], visit: <http://blogs.webmd.com/breaking-news/2016/02/survey-reveals-beliefs-behaviors-on-alzheimers.html>.

The Impact on Families and Caregivers

While the majority of respondents (66%) acknowledge that Alzheimer's-related costs could cause their family great financial harm, 71% said their family is not financially equipped to deal with the disease.

Millennials in particular are in a precarious position. Two-thirds (66%) said they have never considered the financial implications of someone in their family being diagnosed. They were more likely than any other age group to describe themselves as "caregivers on deck," with 32% saying that the majority of caregiving would likely fall to them if a parent or grandparent were diagnosed with the disease. Half of millennials (51%) said they are not concerned about getting the disease, primarily because they believe they are years away from having to worry about it (44%).

The cost of caregiving is heavy across all age groups. More than 1 in 5 (22%) people have assumed caregiving responsibilities for someone with Alzheimer's, with almost half of these caregivers (47%) saying it is either a full- or part-time job. More than 1 in 4 caregivers (28%) provide hours of care each week that are the equivalent of a full-time job (40+ hours). Another 1 in 5 (19%) spend the equivalent hours of a part-time job (20+ hours).

Women were more likely than men to say they were or had been a caregiver (24% vs. 17%) and were more likely to quit a job than men (16% vs. 8%) in order to care for someone with Alzheimer's.

Misperceptions About Risk and Prevention

While the majority of readers surveyed understand that Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging (89%), that it is fatal (76%), and even that it can strike people as young as age 40 (90%), significant misperceptions persist regarding who is at highest risk for Alzheimer's:

- | 67% did not know Alzheimer's is more likely to strike African-Americans and Hispanics than whites.
- | 49% did not know that a woman in her 60s was more likely to get Alzheimer's than breast cancer.

Further, 67% state that they want to better understand their risk for Alzheimer's. Yet when provided a list of steps they could take to assess their risk (e.g. reviewing their medical or family history with their doctor, genetic tests, etc.), 41% said they would not do any of them.

Attitudes and Concerns

About 5.3 million Americans currently have Alzheimer's, and the number is expected to increase 40% by 2025. Approximately a third (34%) of survey respondents said they are concerned about getting the disease. Among those who are concerned, 69% cited being a burden to family and 60% cited the lack of a cure as the main reasons for their unease. Even with high awareness of the disease and its potential impact, only 11% of those surveyed said that they had talked to their doctors about ways to prevent it.

Among the respondents who did not identify as "concerned" (46% unconcerned, 20% neither concerned nor unconcerned), 40% said their rationale is that they take care of their health, while 36% said they cannot do anything about it anyway.

Physicians appear to share in concerns about available treatment options. According to a new Medscape survey titled **Medscape Alzheimer Disease Diagnosis and Treatment Survey**, also released today [<http://www.medscape.com/features/slideshow/public/alzheimer-disease-report>], less than a third of doctors (29%) believe that anything can be done to prevent Alzheimer's. However, a significant majority (77%) are confident that it is possible to slow the disease's progression.

WebMD and Shriver Report Snapshot / Architects of Change Conversation

The complete report, including articles, graphics, and an op-ed penned by Ms. Shriver, are now available at [WebMD.com](http://www.webmd.com) [<http://www.webmd.com/news/breaking-news/confronting-alzheimers/default.htm>] and [MariaShriver.com](http://www.mariashriver.com). On March 3, WebMD will also publish an exclusive video interview with Ms. Shriver, Seth and Lauren Miller Rogen, conducted by WebMD Chief Medical Editor Michael Smith on its website. Video clips from the February 24 *Architects of Change* conversation are also available online at [<http://www.shrivermedia.com/project/experiences/>].

WebMD and Shriver Report Snapshot: Insight into Alzheimer's Attitudes and Behaviors Survey Methods and Supplemental Information

The WebMD and Shriver Media survey was completed by 4,217 random U.S. desktop and mobile WebMD site visitors from January 13 through February 1, 2016. All visitors had an equal probability of answering the survey. The sample represents the WebMD.com online population with a margin of error of $\pm 1.51\%$ at a 95% confidence level, using a point estimate (a statistic) of 50%, given a binomial distribution.

About Shriver Media [<http://shrivermmedia.com/>]

Shriver Media is a 21st Century socially conscious media company that produces films, documentaries, original digital reporting and live events to inform, inspire, enlighten and entertain. Our team collaborates with like-minded partners and offers diverse media brands that we believe can impact individuals and society in a positive way. We ignite hearts and minds.

About WebMD

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* Source: Alzheimer's Association

To view the original version on PR Newswire, visit:<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/webmd-and-shriver-media-survey-sheds-new-light-on-our-understanding-of-and-response-to-the-growing-alzheimers-epidemic-300226446.html>

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