

\$41M Grant to Fund Multiethnic Alzheimer's Research

Latino and Black individuals are often left out of Alzheimer's research despite having a higher risk of developing the disease.

April 14, 2023 By Laura Schmidt

Mayo Clinic researchers and colleagues from 13 other institutions throughout the country received a five-year grant totaling \$41 million from the National Institute on Aging to conduct multiethnic research on [Alzheimer's disease](#), which has [primarily focused on white individuals](#) of European descent in the past.

The [Centrally-Linked Longitudinal Peripheral Biomarkers of AD in Multiethnic Populations](#) (CLEAR-AD) program aims to "identify the next generation of precision medicine biomarkers and potential novel therapeutic targets of Alzheimer's disease and other related [dementias](#)," according to a [Mayo Clinic news release](#).

Physician-scientist and Mayo Clinic professor of neuroscience and neurology Nilüfer Ertekin-Taner, MD, PhD, and a team of co-principal investigators will lead CLEAR-AD.

"We know that Alzheimer's disease afflicts patients from African-American backgrounds at a rate twice as high as that in white populations. For Latino Americans, the risk is one and a half times greater than that in white populations," Ertekin-Taner [told Mayo Clinic](#). "These populations have traditionally been understudied for Alzheimer's disease, leading to a major knowledge gap."

Despite their higher rates of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, Blacks and Latinos have often been underrepresented in Alzheimer's research. For example, Latinos made up only 3% of the 3,300 patients enrolled in two large clinical trials for Alzheimer's treatment in 2021, according to the Food and Drug Administration's [Center for Drug and Evaluation and Research Drug Trials Snapshots Summary Report of 2021](#).

What's more, [Latinos who speak only Spanish](#) are often excluded from clinical trials because they do not speak English, leading to racial disparities in brain health equity.

The CLEAR-AD program aims to better understand the unique set of risk factors associated with Alzheimer's disease to determine ways to lower risks and increase preventive measures.

“Ultimately, we hope to find biomarkers that will enable us to predict whether somebody is going to develop Alzheimer’s disease, how fast their disease may progress and, eventually, to be able to find precision medicine cures for this complex condition,” Ertekin-Taner said.

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