

Digital Resources for Alzheimer's Disease Lacking for Latinos in LA

Only a handful of Alzheimer's disease groups featured online tools to improve access for Latino families during and after the pandemic.

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Latinos having a higher risk of developing [Alzheimer's disease](#) compared with other ethnic groups; what's more, they account for nearly half of the population of Los Angeles. Despite this, a UCLA study found that digital resources for Latinos have been lacking since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a [UCLA news release](#).

Published in the [Journal of Medical Internet Research](#), the study found that only a few of Los Angeles County's top 15 Alzheimer's organization websites featured tools to improve access for Latino families during and after the pandemic.

Alzheimer's is a progressive illness that affects parts of the [brain](#) that control thought, memory and language and is the most common type of [dementia](#). It can begin with mild memory loss that may lead to an individual's inability to converse and react to the environment and can interfere with his or her ability to handle routine daily tasks.

About 10% of U.S. adults ages 45 and older experience cognitive decline and worsening [memory](#), according to the [American Heart Association](#). For Latino adults, that rate is about 11.4% higher compared with other racial groups.

"The prevalence of Alzheimer's disease in Latino and Hispanic communities is estimated to triple by 2040. Yet, the digital divide keeps too many families from accessing essential Alzheimer's resources," said study senior author Mirella Díaz-Santos, PhD, director and founder of the Equity for Latinx-Hispanic Healthy Aging (ELHA) Lab at the UCLA Easton Center for Alzheimer's Research and Care, in the UCLA release. "It is critical that we develop accessible, culturally competent digital solutions to close this gap."

Beginning in 2022 with additional evaluation in early 2025, researchers analyzed 15 of LA County's top AD organizations or institutions based on the following criteria:

- Type and number of services available in Spanish;
- Web accessibility tools;
- Support for familial dialogue and community-based approaches;
- Inclusion of linguistic or cultural barriers.

Of the 15 websites, the study found:

- Four offered Spanish-language services in 2022; up to six in 2025.
- Five offered web accessibility tools (font size adjustments, screen reader compatibility) in 2022; down to four in 2025.
- Two included support for familial dialogue and community-based approaches in 2022; up to three in 2025.
- Structural barriers included required email sign-ups, English-language forms and limited Spanish-speaking support staff.

Researchers hope these findings can help address digital [health disparities](#) for communities at higher risk of developing Alzheimer's, Díaz-Santos said.

To learn more, click [#Alzheimer's Disease](#) or read Tu Salud's [Health Basics on Alzheimer's Disease](#). It reads in part:

What are the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease?

Some typical signs of Alzheimer's include the following:

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life, especially forgetting recently learned information or important dates or events;
- Changes in the ability to follow a plan or solve problems;

- Difficulty completing familiar chores, duties or work;
- Losing track of time, dates and places, resulting in confusion and uncertainty;
- Trouble reading, understanding visual images and judging distance;
- Problems speaking, repetitiveness during conversations and struggling with words;
- Misplacing objects and being unable to backtrack to find them;
- Poor judgment and decision-making and changes in mood and personality or inappropriate behavior;
- Withdrawing from work or social activities that were previously enjoyable or routine.

What are the risk factors for Alzheimer's disease?

According to scientists, the greatest known risk factor for Alzheimer's is advancing age, as most individuals with the disease are age 65 or older. In addition, after age 85, the risk of someone developing the illness jumps to almost 50%. Other strong risk factors include family history and heredity. Also, scientists have uncovered some risk factors linked to Alzheimer's that people can control, such as serious and repetitive head injuries and suffering damages to the heart or blood vessels from high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and elevated cholesterol levels.