MetLife Foundation Alzheimer's Survey: What America Thinks

May 11, 2006
# Table of Contents

- Background and Objectives ................................................................. 3
- Executive Summary ............................................................................. 5
- Main Findings .................................................................................... 12
- Appendix ............................................................................................ 34
- Sample and Methodology ................................................................. 35
Background

- Currently, 4.5 million Americans have Alzheimer’s disease. The Alzheimer’s Association estimates that these numbers will grow to as many as 16 million Americans by 2050.¹

- Increasing age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer’s. One in 10 individuals over 65 and nearly half of those over 85 are affected. ²

- The average lifetime cost of care for an individual with Alzheimer’s was $174,000 in the 1990s.³

- Nearly 1 in 4 caregivers of Alzheimer’s disease sufferers commit to 40 hours or more a week providing constant care. Many of these caregivers do this for more than a year.⁴

¹ Hebert, LE; Scherr, PA; Bienias, JL; Bennett, DA; Evans, DA. “Alzheimer Disease in the U.S. Population: Prevalence Estimates Using the 2000 Census.” Archives of Neurology August 2003; 60 (8): 1119 – 1122.


⁴ National Alliance of Caregiving (2004)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
Objectives

• The MetLife Foundation commissioned Harris Interactive to conduct a survey of the public about:
  • Knowledge of Alzheimer’s disease;
  • Fears about Alzheimer’s disease; and
  • Plans for the potential of developing Alzheimer’s disease

• The sample is representative of the U.S. adult population living in households with telephones in the continental United States.
Executive Summary

Americans fear Alzheimer’s more than heart disease, stroke, or diabetes.

- Compared to other major diseases, 1 in 5 (20%) Americans is most afraid of developing Alzheimer’s disease.
  - Women are significantly more likely than men to report being most afraid of developing Alzheimer’s disease (23% v. 17%)
  - Older Americans (ages 55 and older) are also significantly more likely than younger Americans (ages under 55) to report being most afraid of developing Alzheimer’s disease (31% vs. 16%).
Executive Summary

While virtually all Americans are aware of Alzheimer’s disease, only one in four has a good understanding of the condition.

- 93% of Americans feel they know at least a little about Alzheimer’s disease.
  - 1 in 4 (26%) Americans says he/she knows a lot about Alzheimer’s disease.
  - The youngest Americans are less likely to say they know a lot about Alzheimer’s (17% of those ages 18-24 v. 31% of 45-54 and 30% of 65 and over).
  - Women report more knowledge about Alzheimer’s disease than men (32% of women know a lot, compared to 20% of men).
Executive Summary

One-third of Americans have direct experience with Alzheimer’s disease.

- 1 in 3 Americans (35%) has a family member and/or friend with Alzheimer’s.

Most Americans are concerned that they will one day have to provide for care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease.

- 3 in 5 Americans (62%) are at least somewhat concerned that they will have to someday provide for care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease.
Executive Summary

The large majority of Americans think that it is important to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

- 81% of Americans think it is at least somewhat important to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease, including 35% who think it is very or extremely important.

- 17% of Americans think it is not at all important to make such plans.

- Women are more likely than men to think it is important to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease, as compared to 78% of men.
Executive Summary

Despite widespread agreement that it is important to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease, the large majority of Americans report that they have not done so.

- Nearly 9 out of 10 Americans (87%) have not made a plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s.

Most Americans have not taken basic steps to make personal, financial or living arrangements if they were to develop Alzheimer’s disease.

- 4 of 5 Americans (83%) have not made financial arrangements for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

- 7 of 10 Americans (72%) have not considered what care options would be available if they were to get Alzheimer’s.

- 3 of 5 Americans (64%) have not talked to their family about Alzheimer’s.

- 3 of 5 Americans (58%) have not designated who would take care of their affairs were they to get Alzheimer’s.

*MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006*
Implications

1. Americans are deeply worried about Alzheimer's, both for themselves and their loved ones. Fear is especially present among older Americans. Americans are also concerned they will someday have to support someone with this disease.

2. While the vast majority believes that it is important to prepare for the possibility of developing the disease, there are gaps in knowledge about the disease and behavior when it comes to actually taking any steps to prepare for this possibility. Only a few have a good understanding of the disease or taken steps to make basic financial, personal, or legal arrangements in preparation for the possibility of developing Alzheimer’s disease.

3. These findings indicate a need for greater understanding of Alzheimer’s disease. The data also suggests that there is an opportunity to build awareness and help bridge the gaps that were identified in knowledge and behavior.

4. It appears that the public may find it useful to receive education on this topic, given fears about personal risk and concerns about having to take responsibility for a family member with Alzheimer’s. Given the sentiment that it is important to prepare for the possibility of the disease, the public might be receptive to information about how to do so.

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
MAIN FINDINGS
Alzheimer’s disease is the 2nd most feared disease in America, ranking after cancer and ahead of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Q1 I am going to read you a list of diseases. Please tell me which of these you are MOST afraid of getting.

**Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)**

*MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006*
Women are significantly more likely than men to be afraid of developing Alzheimer’s disease.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Men n=503</th>
<th>Women n=505</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer’s Disease</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate significant difference between men and women.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q1 I am going to read you a list of diseases. Please tell me which of these you are MOST afraid of getting.
Adults aged 55 and over are much more likely than younger adults to be afraid of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

NOTE: Percentages for those aged 55-64 and 65+ are significantly higher than all younger ages.

Due to sample size, the difference between those aged 55-64 and those aged 65+ is not statistically significant.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q1 I am going to read you a list of diseases. Please tell me which of these you are MOST afraid of getting.
Among adults aged 55 and older, fear of Alzheimer’s disease is as great as fear of cancer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>18-34 n=184</th>
<th>35-54 n=397</th>
<th>55+ n=420</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer’s Disease</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate significant difference across age groups.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q1 I am going to read you a list of diseases. Please tell me which of these you are MOST afraid of getting.
7 out of 10 Americans feel that at the most they know only a little about Alzheimer’s disease.

- Nothing at all, 7%
- A lot, 26%
- A little, 67%

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)
Q2 How much do you know about Alzheimer’s disease?

*MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006*
Women report significantly more knowledge about Alzheimer’s disease than do men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men n=503</th>
<th>Women n=505</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing at all</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate significant difference between men and women.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)
Q2 How much do you know about Alzheimer’s disease?

*MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006*
Younger Americans report less knowledge about Alzheimer’s disease than do older Americans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>18-34 n=184</th>
<th>35-54 n=397</th>
<th>55+ n=420</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A lot</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A little/Nothing at all (net)</strong></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A little</strong></td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nothing at all</strong></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate significant difference between age groups.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

Q2 How much do you know about Alzheimer’s disease?  

*MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006*
One in three Americans has a family member or friend who has Alzheimer’s disease.

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q3  Do any of your family members or friends have Alzheimer’s disease?
Adults living in the North Central region are more likely than in other regions to have family members or friends with Alzheimer’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate significant difference between regions.

Note: Breakdown on which states fall into which region can be found in the appendix.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)  
MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q3 Do any of your family members or friends have Alzheimer’s disease?
The large majority of Americans think it is at least somewhat important to plan for Alzheimer’s.

- Somewhat Important: 46%
- Very Important: 24%
- Extremely Important: 11%
- Not at all Important: 17%

Don't Know = 1%

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q5 How important do you think it is to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease in the future?
Women are more likely than men to feel it is important to plan for the possibility of Alzheimer’s disease.

Men (net) = 78%
Women (net) 84%

Don't Know
Men = 1%
Women = 2%

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
Adults residing in the South are more likely than others to recognize the importance of planning for the possibility of Alzheimer’s disease.

Note: Breakdown on which states fall into which region can be found in the appendix.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)  
MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q5 How important do you think it is to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease in the future?
Americans from metropolitan areas are more likely than others to feel it is important to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

Metro (net) = 38%
Non-metro (net) = 29%

Note: Definitions of categories can be found in the appendix.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)  
MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q5 How important do you think it is to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease in the future?
Non-white adults are more likely than whites to believe that it is important to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

White (net) = 29%
Non-white (net) = 53%

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q5 How important do you think it is to plan for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease in the future?
Almost 9 out of 10 Americans have NOT made plans for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)  
MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006

Q6 How YOU made plans for the possibility of your getting Alzheimer’s disease?
Most Americans have not taken basic steps to make arrangements for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s disease.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you…</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designated who would take care of your affairs were you to get Alzheimer’s</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked to your family about Alzheimer’s disease</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered what care options would be available to you if you were to get Alzheimer’s</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made financial arrangements for the possibility of your getting Alzheimer’s</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
Affluent Americans – earning at least $75K - are more likely than those with lower incomes to have made financial arrangements for the possibility of getting Alzheimer’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you...</th>
<th>&lt; $35K %</th>
<th>$35K to &lt; $75K %</th>
<th>$75K or more %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designated who would take care of your affairs were you to get Alzheimer’s</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked to your family about Alzheimer’s disease</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered what care options would be available to you if you were to get Alzheimer’s</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made financial arrangements for the possibility of your getting Alzheimer’s</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate significant difference between income levels.

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)  
MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
3 out of 5 Americans are concerned that they will have to provide for or care for someone with Alzheimer’s.

Q4 How concerned are you that you may someday have to provide for or care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease?

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)  
MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
Men and women are equally concerned about the possibility of having to provide for or care for someone with Alzheimer’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern Level</th>
<th>Men (n=503)</th>
<th>Women (n=505)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all Concerned</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Concerned</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Concerned</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Concerned</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

Q4 How concerned are you that you may someday have to provide for or care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease?

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
Americans living in the South are more likely than others to be concerned that they may have to support someone with Alzheimer’s disease.

**MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006**

Q4  How concerned are you that you may someday have to provide for or care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease?
Non-white adults are more concerned than whites that they will have to support someone with Alzheimer’s disease.

Whites (net) = 15%
Non-whites (net) = 28%

Base: All qualified respondents (N=1008)

Q4 How concerned are you that you may someday have to provide for or care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease?

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006
Sample and Methodology

• This survey was conducted as part of the Harris Interactive omnibus telephone survey.

• The sample is representative of the U.S. adult population living in households with telephones in the continental United States.

• The survey was conducted using random digit dialing (RDD) – a technique ensuring geographic representativeness of the sample and inclusion of households with listed and unlisted telephone numbers.

• Sample consists of 1,008 adults (503 men and 505 women) 18 years of age and older.

• Interviewing was completed during January 19-22, 2006.
Definitions of regions and geography

REGIONS

North East
Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania

North Central
Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas

South
Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

West
Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California

GEOGRAPHY (Size of place)

Metro
In Center City of Metropolitan Area
Outside Center City, Inside Center City County
Inside Suburban County of Metropolitan Area
In Metropolitan Area with No Center City

Non-Metro
In Non-Metropolitan Area

MetLife Foundation Alzheimer’s Survey: What America Thinks, 2006