

Young-onset dementia in a Tertiary Memory Clinic: the experience in the Padova County

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Introduction

Increased awareness of young-onset dementia (YOD), defined as dementia with symptoms onset before age 65, made this diagnosis more frequent in the last years. We aim to assess the incidence of YOD in Padova County and to identify how many diagnostic resources are dedicated to these patients.

Materials and methods

Demographic, clinical and social data from 109 patients with young-onset cognitive decline and a first visit between January and December 2022 in two referral centers of the University Hospital of Padova were retrospectively collected.

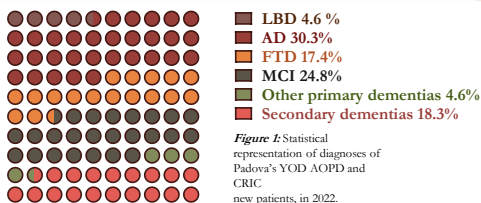


Figure 1: Statistical representation of diagnoses of Padova's YOD AOPD and CRIC new patients, in 2022.

Results

76/109 patients received a diagnosis of young-onset cognitive decline (59 YOD and 17 MCI) and were residents in Padova County. The incidence rate of YOCD (considering dementia and also MCI) was 13.28 (95% CI, 12.90-13.66) per 100,000 PY, while the age-sex standardized incidence rate was 13.28 (95% CI, 12.90-13.66) per 100,000 PY. The incidence rate of YOD was 10.49/100,000 PY (95% CI, 7.99-13.53). The incidence rate of YOD just for neurodegenerative diagnoses was 7.65 (95% CI, 5.53-10.30) per 100,000 PY, while the age-sex standardized incidence rate was 7.90 (95% CI, 7.61-8.20) per 100,000 PY. Incidence increased with age in both sexes, reaching its peak after 60 years.

Alzheimer's disease was the most frequent diagnosis (30.3%), followed by secondary dementia (18.3%) and frontotemporal dementia (17.4%).

Non-neurodegenerative dementias were due to primary psychiatric diseases (5 cases), VAD (4 cases), post-Covid 19 infection (2 cases), Down's syndrome (2 cases), limbic encephalitis (1 case) and metabolic encephalopathy.

After cognitive testing and brain MRI, FDG-PET (44.1%), CSF analysis (33.9%), and dementia-oriented genetic study (27.1%) were the resources mostly used.

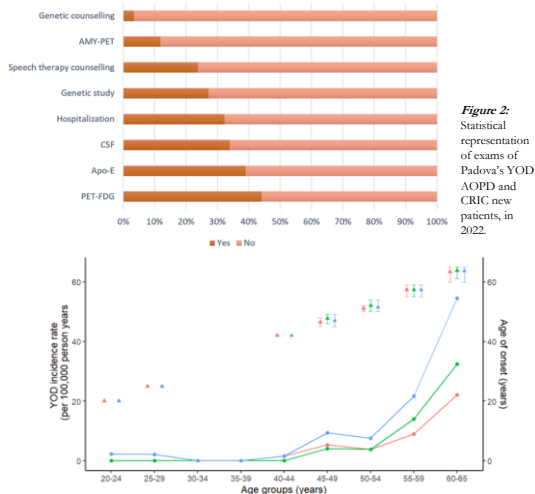


Figure 2: Statistical representation of exams of Padova's YOD AOPD and CRIC new patients, in 2022.

Figure 3: YOD age at onset and incidence by age groups and sex. red = male green = female blue = total

Discussion and conclusions

From these data we can yield 3646 (95% CI, 3529-3766) new annually estimated cases of YOD in the Italian population, ignoring mortality. Highly specialized diagnostic resources are requested more often than in late-onset dementia, and a dedicated care pathway is recommended. Improved knowledge of YOD epidemiology is essential to organize health services.

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