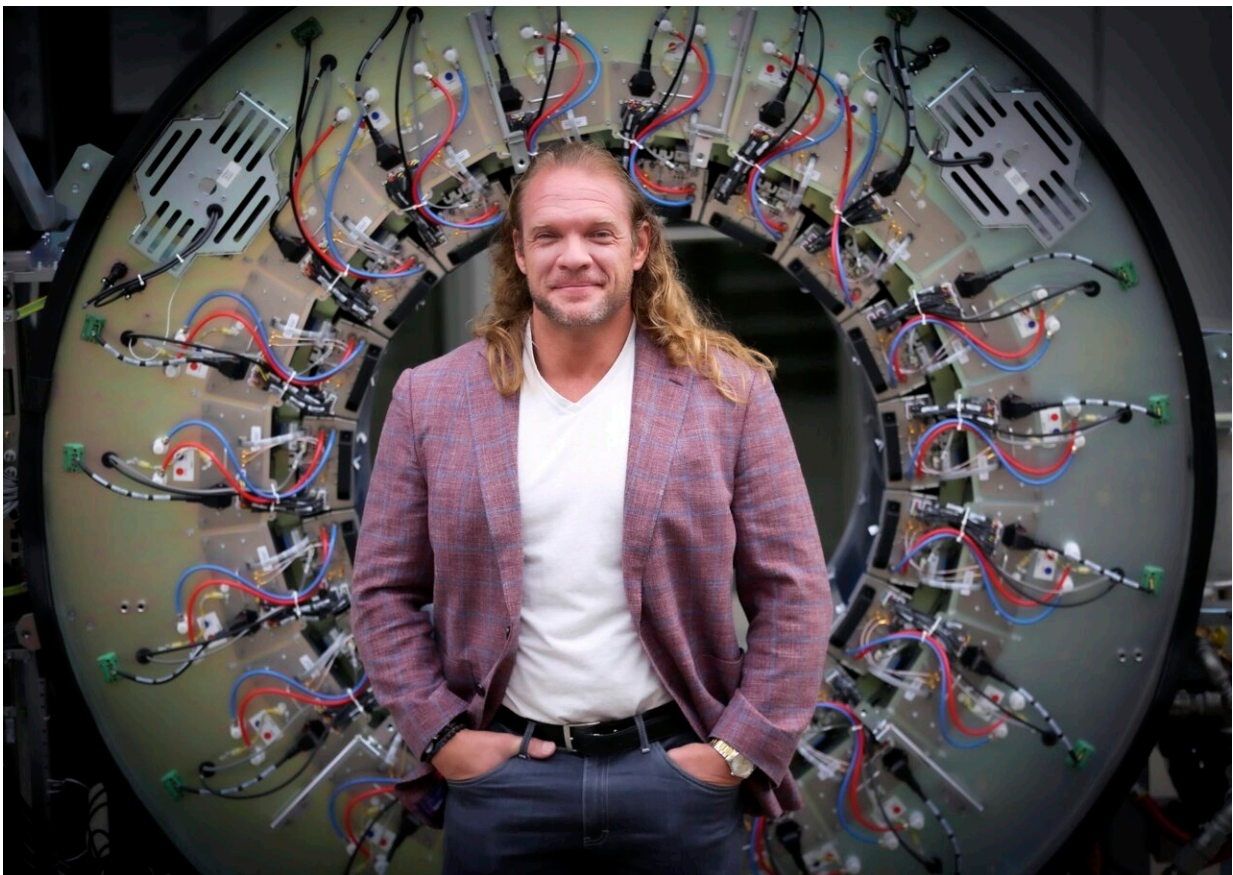


Early findings of Alzheimer's study in diverse populations now available to researchers

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Dr. O'Bryant announced the availability of the research data in article published June 21 in *Alzheimer's & Dementia: Diagnosis, Assessment & Disease Monitoring*, a national journal published by the Alzheimer's Association. Credit: HSC

A growing trove of data to help scientists understand the biology of Alzheimer's disease among diverse populations within the context of sociocultural, behavioral and environmental factors is now available through the Institute for Translational Research at The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth (HSC).

The [research data](#) is the result of the Health and Aging Brain among Latino Elders (HABLE) study launched in 2017 with \$12 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health and headed by Sid O'Bryant, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Institute.

In 2020, the HABLE study received an additional \$45 million from National Institute on Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health.

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"The data from this study is a first-of-a-kind for the field," Dr. O'Bryant said. "We will for the first time be able to examine the biology of Alzheimer's among Mexican Americans as well as non-Hispanic whites all within the context of sociocultural, environmental and behavioral factors. Scientists from across the globe can use this data to address health disparities and define new diagnostic and treatment opportunities for underserved communities."

The percentage of Hispanics 65 and above in the U.S. will triple by the year 2050 and, when compared to other racial or ethnic groups, are expected to experience the largest increase in Alzheimer's disease related dementias by 2060, according to the paper. About 65 percent of U.S. Hispanics are of Mexican decent.

However, Mexican Americans are severely underrepresented in Alzheimer's research, resulting too few comprehensive studies of the biomarkers of the disease among this population. Early findings suggest that beta amyloid protein—one of the biomarkers of Alzheimer's—is less common among Mexican Americans yet Mexican Americans seem to have a younger onset of cognitive loss.

About 1,000 Mexican Americans and 1,000 non-Latino whites over 50 from North Texas have enrolled in the study that gives participants reoccurring and free comprehensive interviews, functional exams, clinical laboratory tests, a brain MRI and state-of-the-art PET Scans.

The PET Scans allow researchers to observe the differences over time in the development of the biomarkers between Mexican Americans and non-Latino whites.

In December, HSC announced an additional \$7 million investment that to add 1,000 African Americans to the study. Among people 65 and older, African Americans have the highest prevalence of Alzheimer's [disease](#), followed by Hispanics and non-Latino whites, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The project is the only comprehensive, large-scale Alzheimer's research study into the three largest [ethnic groups](#) in the U.S. - Non-Hispanic whites, Mexican Americans and African Americans.

More information: Sid E. O'Bryant et al, The Health & Aging Brain among Latino Elders (HABLE) study methods and participant characteristics, *Alzheimer's & Dementia: Diagnosis, Assessment & Disease Monitoring* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/dad2.12202](https://doi.org/10.1002/dad2.12202)

Provided by University of North Texas Health Science Center

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