

# Awareness of Dementia

## What we need to understand...

Dementia is a disorder associated with functional limitation, disability, and mortality that can lead to a substantial amount of costs utilization, both socially and economically (Stephan et al., 2018). In order to reduce the possibilities meant to decline public health, it is essential to identify the population and people higher at risk. However, a considerable amount of downgrading in the number of age-specific incidences of dementia have been recorded around the globe.

### People at risk...

According to the report of Lancet Commission on Dementia Prevention, Intervention, and Care (2020), the people more likely to develop symptoms of dementia are those who:

- Possess a less educational background
- Have been through traumatic brain injury
- Are obese or physically inactive
- Are having a hearing impairment, diabetes, hypertension, or depression
- Consume excess alcohol
- Smoke regularly
- Have low social connections
- Live in poor environmental conditions (poor air quality)

These risk factors collectively are responsible to generate 40% of dementia cases worldwide (Livingston et al., 2020). Apart from these, chronological age still remains the prevalent cause of dementia. It has been estimated, dementia affects over 50 million people living in various parts of the world, whereas, approx. 60% of them belong to lower-middle-income countries (WHO, 2022).

### Signs & Symptoms

Genetic, vascular, and psychosocial factors are most commonly known to be responsible for the development of AD (Qiu et al., 2009). AD is likely to develop during middle age before symptoms are distinguished. There are clusters of symptoms that include:

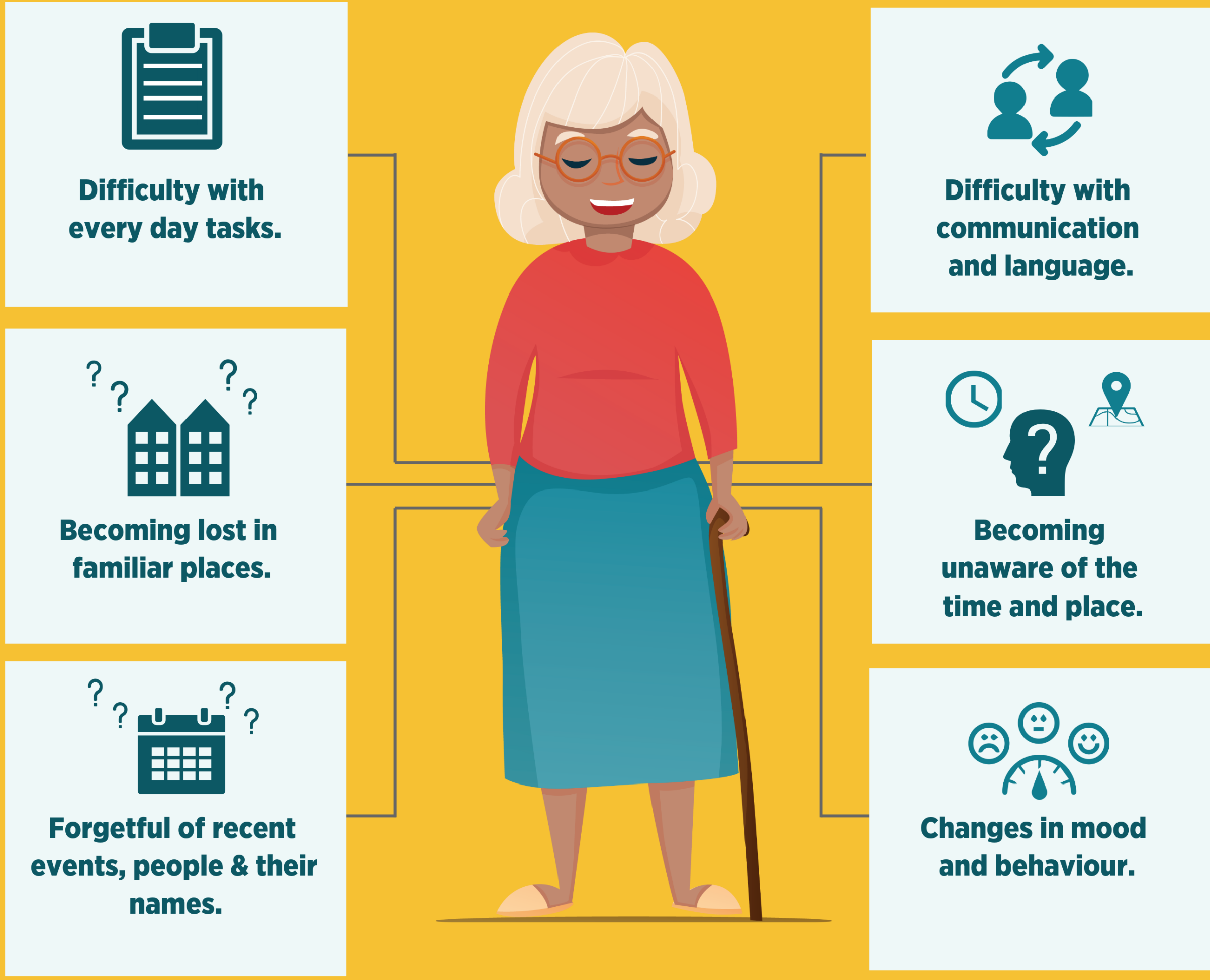
- Overall cognitive decline (caused by a phenomenon that brings about the death of brain cells and loss of neuronal functions) (Silva et al., 2019)
- Signs of forgetfulness,
- memory loss,
- And decreased independence.

VaD is caused by the blockage in the bloodstream that restricts the flow of blood to essential parts of the brain, depriving them of oxygen and nutrients. VaD is often labeled as a vascular cognitive impairment that contributes to:

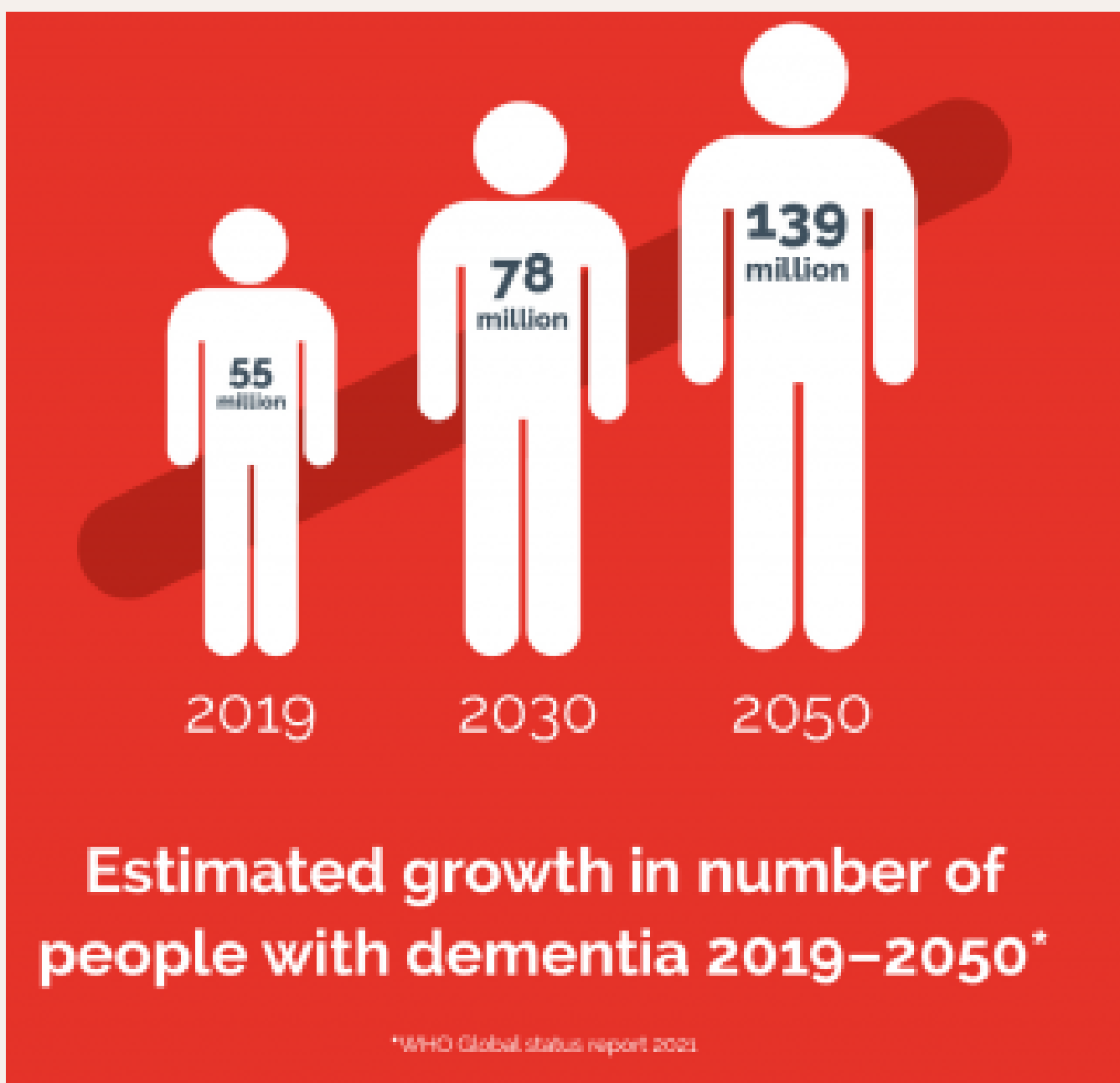
- worsened thinking skills,
- Loss in memory,
- Disorientation,
- Numbness or paralysis on either side of the face,
- Impaired judgment,
- And unable to maintain focus (Alzheimer's Association, 2022)

Alzheimer disease (AD) is the most common type of dementia, which influences 50-75% of the people. Vascular dementia (VaD) is another form impacting 20% of the inhabitants. Dementia with Lewy bodies and frontotemporal lobar dementia are accountable for 5 -7 % of the overall cases, respectively (Cunningham et al., 2015).

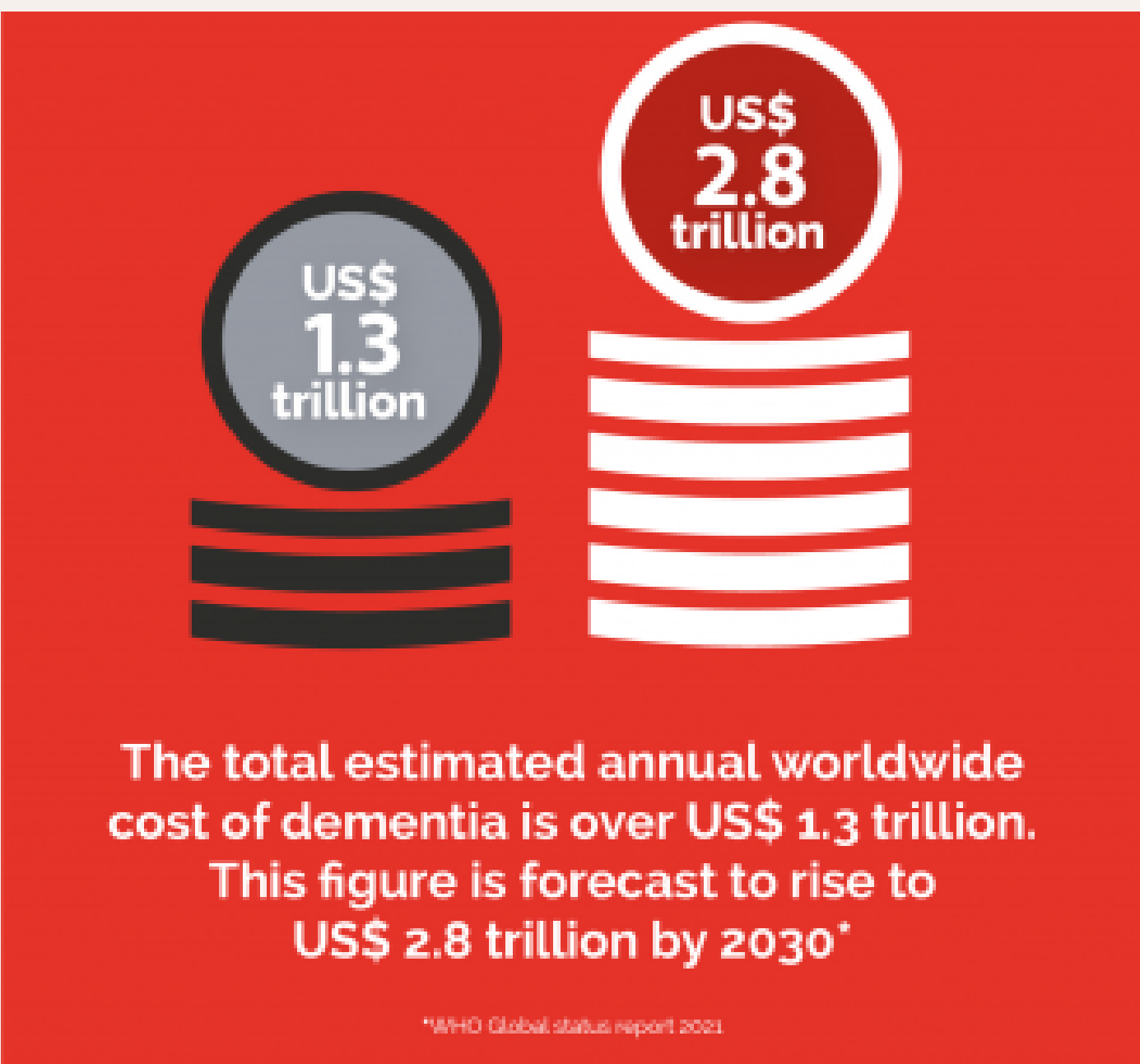
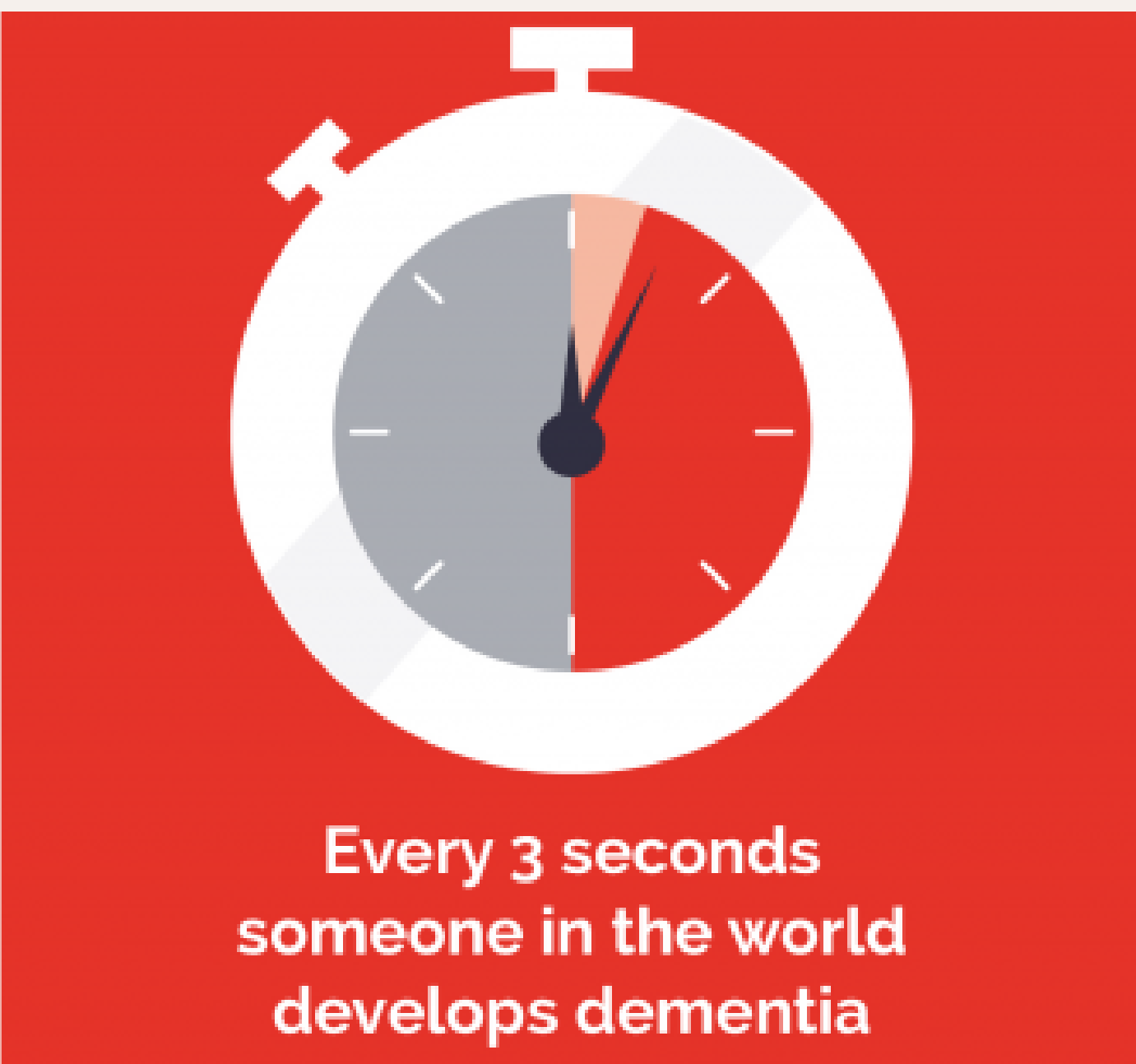
### SIGNS OF DEMENTIA



(Hashim, 2020)



Statistics on Dementia



(Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI), 2022)

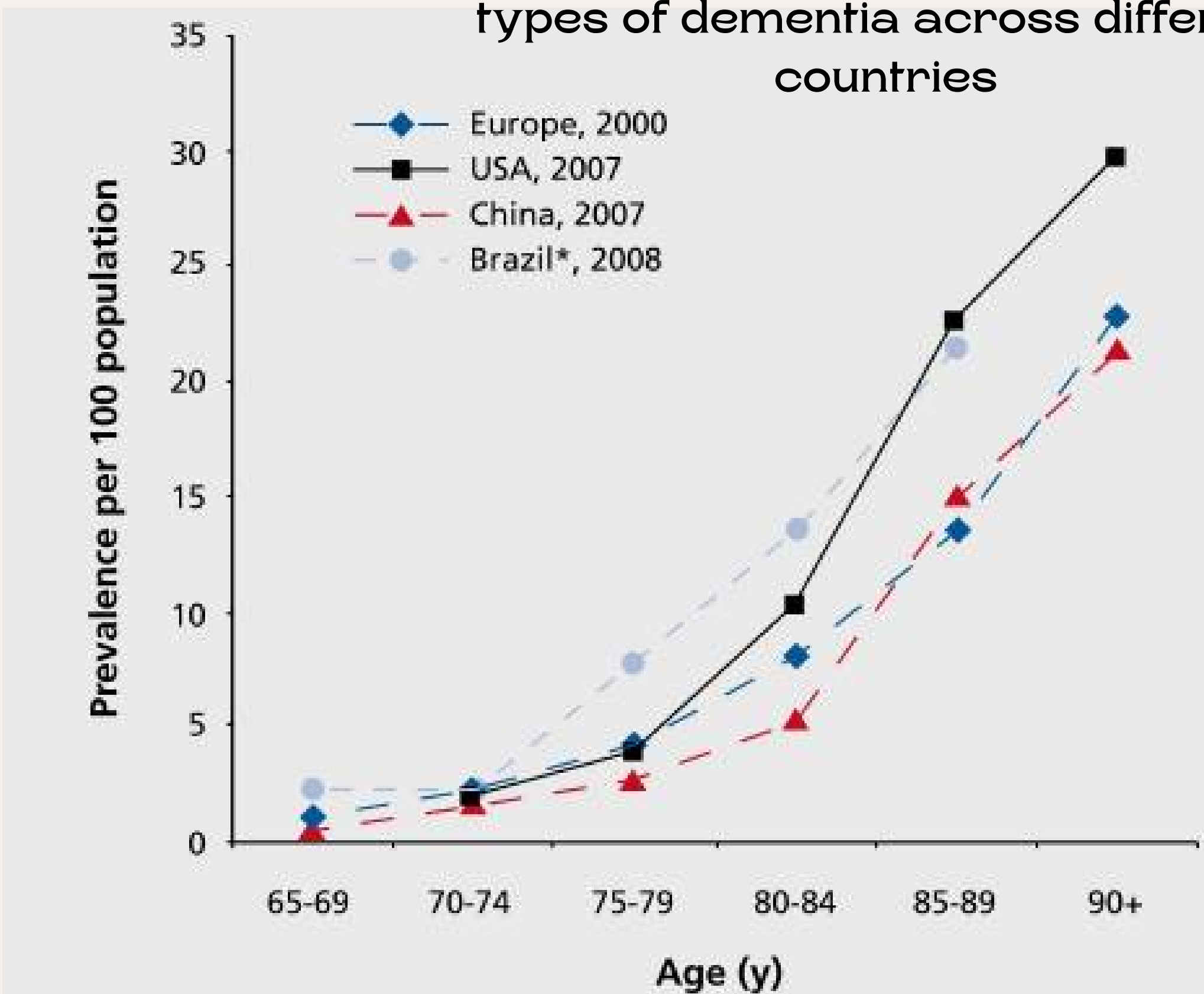
## Steps to follow on detecting Dementia

It is important to undergo primary checkups on regular basis to detect the earliest signs of dementia. In case any noticeable signs of decline in cognitive abilities are observed, one must immediately:

- Consult medical consultant
- Follow effective pharmacological approaches
- Undergo positive lifestyle changes

Hence, it is a critical time to improve your brain health while reducing the possibility of the onset of dementia as age increases.

Age-Specific prevalence of all types of dementia across different countries



## Support System

### Financial Support:

There are allowances specifically arranged for people with long-term physical or mental illness such as attendance allowance (ranging from £60-89.6 per week).

The people of State Pension age can reach out to avail the allowance which is available in England, Scotland, and Wales (Dementia UK, 2022).

### Practical Support:

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) help people with mild to moderate dementia to improve their memory and problem-solving skills through physical and mental activities,

Many local Support Groups Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, Care UK, and other well-established organizations are providing CST support to people with dementia and voluntarily aiding them in giving useful care advice on medical issues specified by GPs and health professionals (Alzheimer's Society, 2022).

### Technology Support:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is being used to spot patterns of changes in the brain taking place due to dementia and enable professionals to diagnose it accurately and instantly.

The use of safety technology for in-home use such as video monitors, medical alerts, location trackers, etc., is taking over in order to keep track of the loved ones with dementia to prevent them from being displaced and to protect them from any kind of harm (Dementia Care Central, 2020).



(Istock images, 2022)



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