

Common Characteristics of Aging Autistic Adults

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What did we study?

We looked at autistic adults (with or without intellectual disability) who were middle-aged and older (ages 40 and over) who also had public health insurance ([Medicaid, Medicare, or both](#)).

Using Medicaid and Medicare claims data is a useful way to study the autistic population because many autistic people rely on public health insurance.

Key findings about aging autistic adults who use Medicaid and/or Medicare:

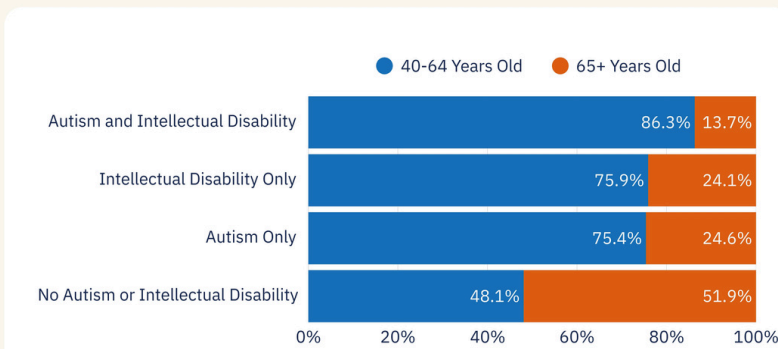
1 Middle-aged and older autistic adults tend to be younger than those who are not autistic and do not have an intellectual disability.*
Approximately **3 out of every 4** middle-aged and older autistic adults were **40-64 years old**.

2 About 1 out of every 3 aging autistic people were female.

3 Aging autistic adults tended to be less racially diverse.
Nearly **80%** of aging autistic adults were white.

4 Over 8 out of 10 aging autistic people lived in urban areas.

At least 3 out of every 4 middle-aged and older adults with autism or intellectual disability were between 40-64 years old.



*It is important to point out that access to better autism diagnosis over time has increased the number of younger adults who are autistic. This may be why the number of 40-64 year olds are much higher than those 65 and older (who had less access to autism diagnoses).

Key Takeaway

Autistic middle-aged and older adults who used public health insurance were usually:

- Younger and less racially diverse than their peers with intellectual disability.
- Male, as is typical of the autistic population.
- Living in urban areas.

These characteristics reflect the status of middle aged and older people diagnosed with autism who have public health insurance. Additionally, the ages of the people in this sample likely reflect better diagnosing over time.

➔ More information on data and methods are available here: nationalautismdatacenter.org/aging-and-autism

The Advancing the System of Care for Autistic Older Adults (ASC) study explores how health and mental health conditions emerge and change for autistic adults as they grow older.