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DI GERONTOLOGIA  
E GERIATRIA

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SIGG

*Ritorno al futuro*

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PALAZZO DEI CONGRESSI

# Aterosclerosi e Malattia di Alzheimer

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**UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI FERRARA**



# Aterosclerosi e Malattia di Alzheimer

## Giovanni Zuliani

***“NON HO ALCUN CONFLITTO  
DI INTERESSI DA DICHIARARE”***



# Aterosclerosi e Malattia di Alzheimer

## Giovanni Zuliani

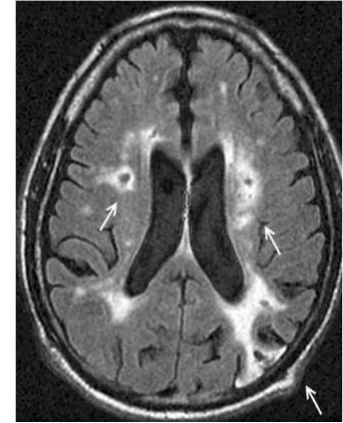
***IL CONTENUTO DELLA PRESENTAZIONE  
NON RIFLETTE NECESSARIAMENTE LE MIE OPINIONI,  
MA RIPORTA DATI PROVENIENTI DALLA  
LETTERATURA SCIENTIFICA INTERNAZIONALE***



# Classificazione delle Demenze



Sir Martin Roth  
(anni '50)



**DEMENZE  
NEURODEGENERATIVE**



**Pattern clinico  
specifico**

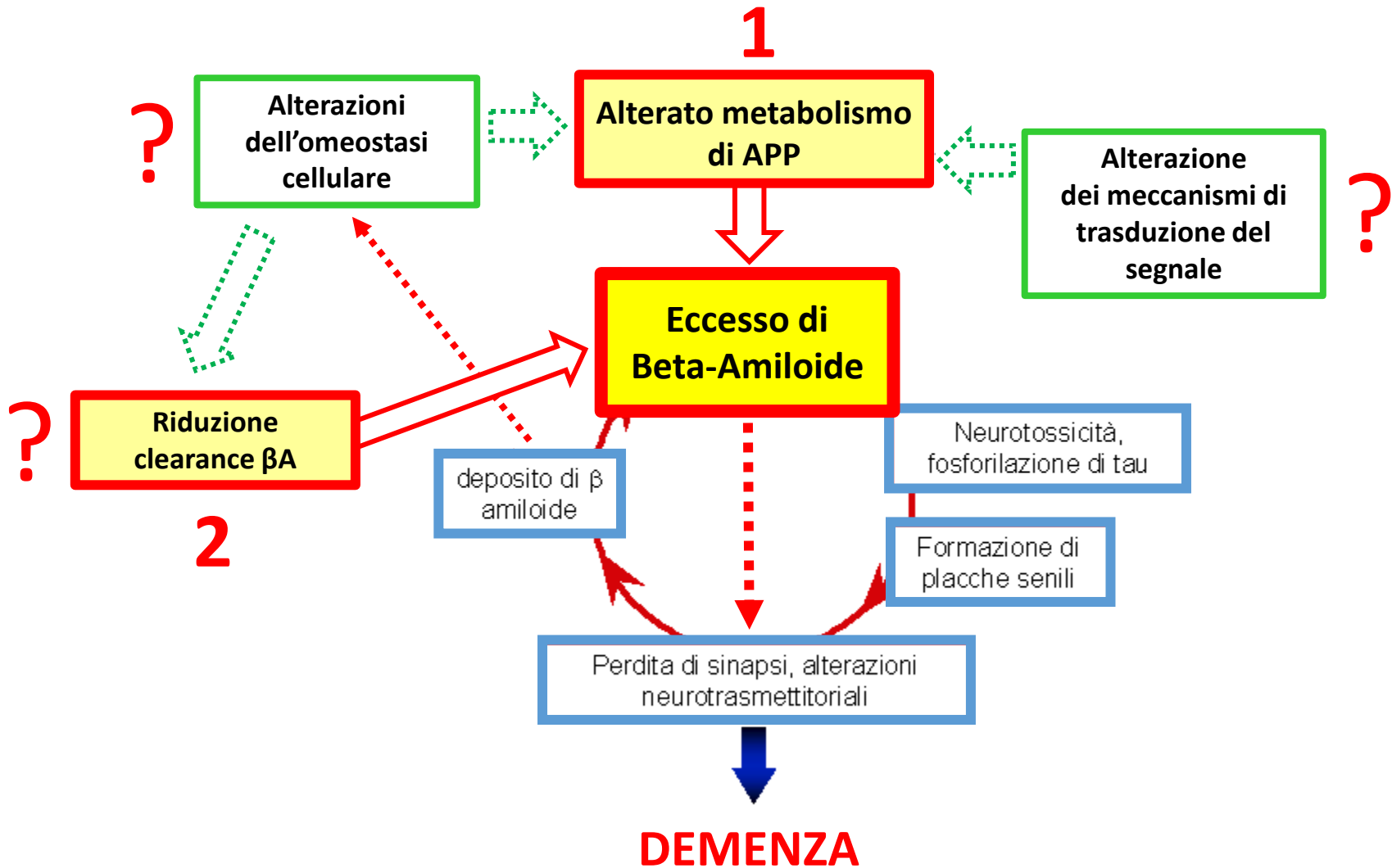
**DEMENZA  
VASCOLARE**



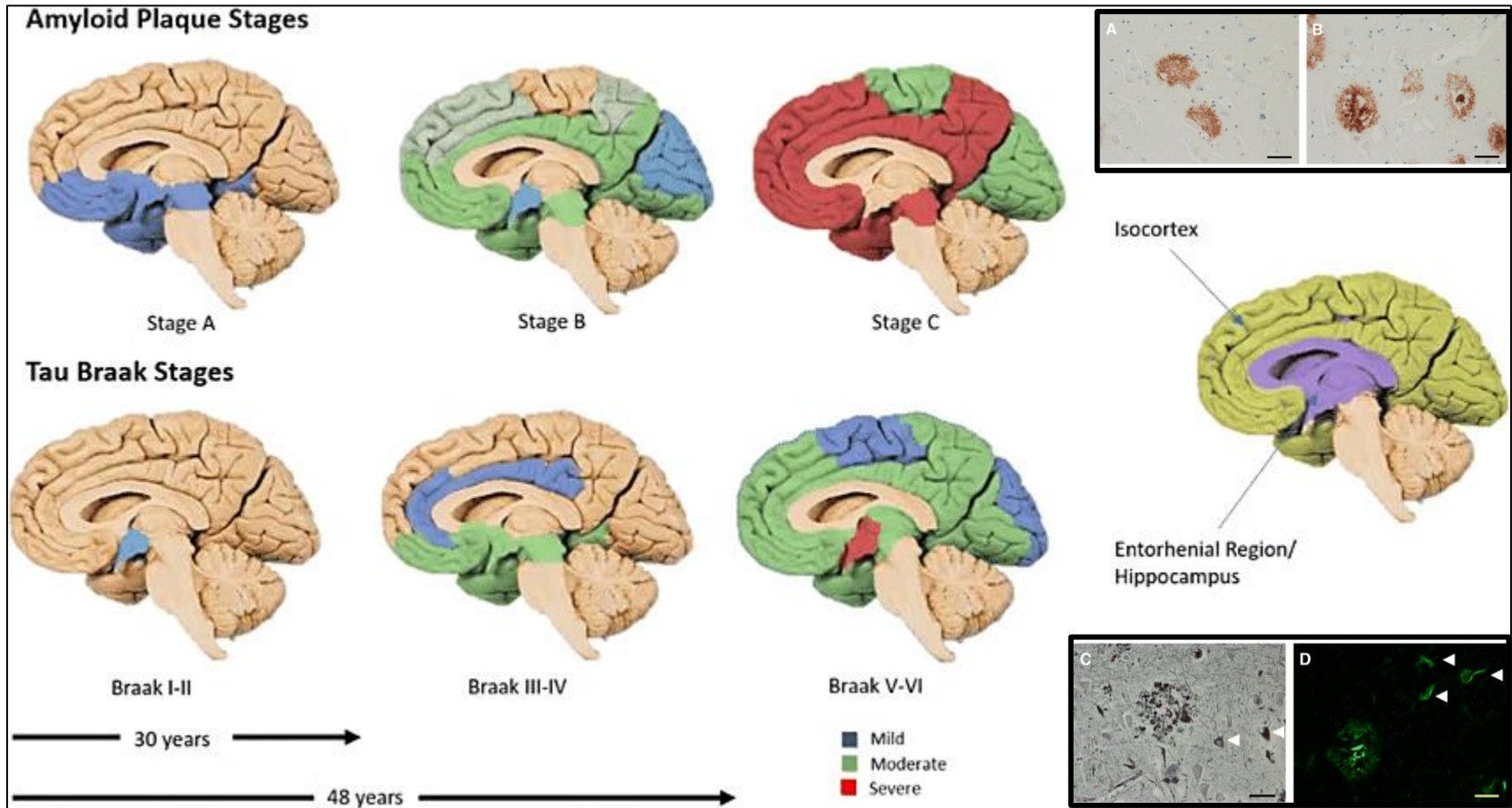
**Pattern clinico  
specifico**

# Malattia di Alzheimer

## Ipotesi patogenetica semplificata



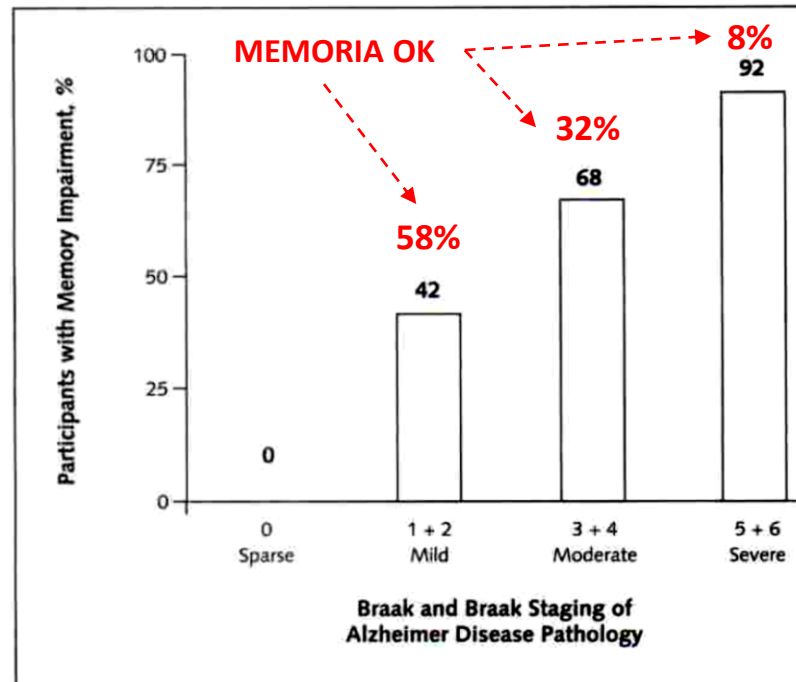
# La diagnosi di Alzheimer è tuttora basata su $\beta$ A e NFT: «NO AMILOIDE, NO ALZHEIMER...»



**Braak & Braak – CERAD - NIA-Reagan**

# Healthy aging and dementia: findings from the Nun study

*Figure 2.* The relationship between the Braak and Braak staging of the degree or spread of Alzheimer disease neurofibrillary pathology and the prevalence of impairments in short-term memory (delayed word recall) at the last examination before death.



II 30% DEI SOGGETTI CON  
DIAGNOSI ANATOMO-  
PATOLOGICA DI AD  
NON HA DEFICIT MNESICO

LA NEUROLOGIA AD  
(BA + TAU)  
E' NECESSARIA MA  
NON SUFFICIENTE



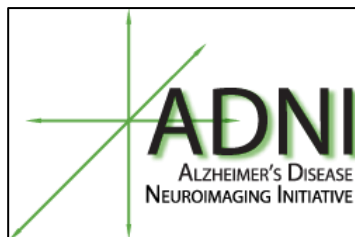
# Objective subtle cognitive difficulties predict future amyloid accumulation and neurodegeneration

**Method:** 747 ADNI participants (305 CN, 153 Obj-SubCognDiff, 289 MCI) underwent neuropsychological testing and serial amyloid PET and structural MRI.

**Objective Subtle Cognitive Difficulties are:**

- associated with faster amyloid accumulation and vulnerability of entorhinal cortical thinning.
- identified PRIOR to or during the pre-clinical stage of amyloid deposition.

*“Cognitive changes may be occurring BEFORE significant levels of amyloid have accumulated ... It seems we may need to focus on treatment targets of pathologies other than amyloid ...”*



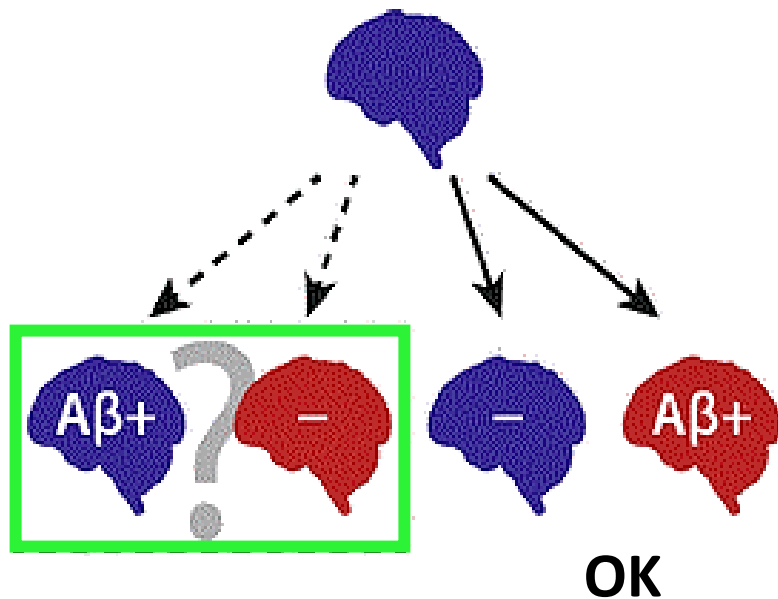
Thomas et al. Neurology 2020



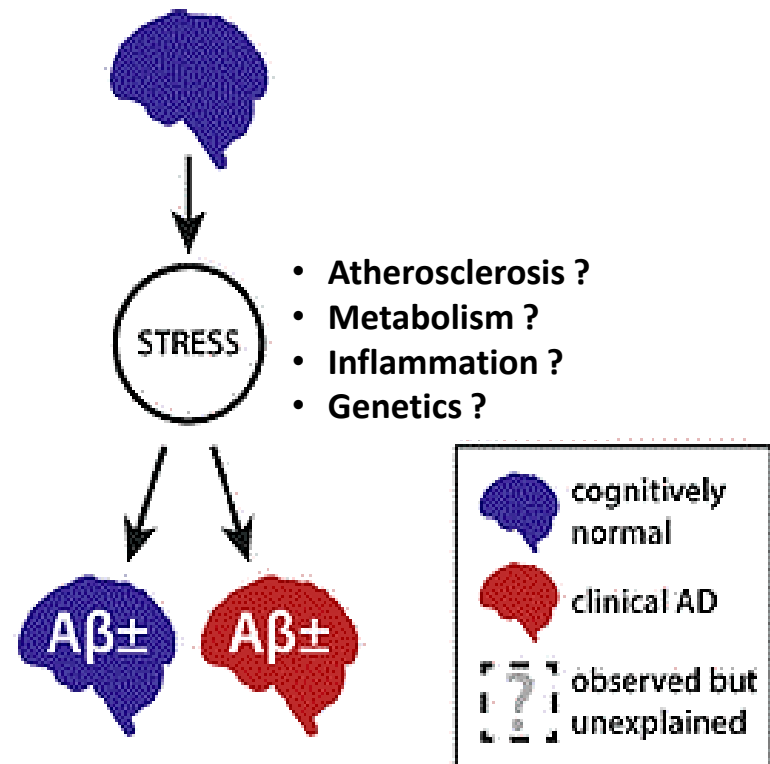


# Ipotesi patogenetica della Malattia di Alzheimer

## A. Amyloid Hypothesis

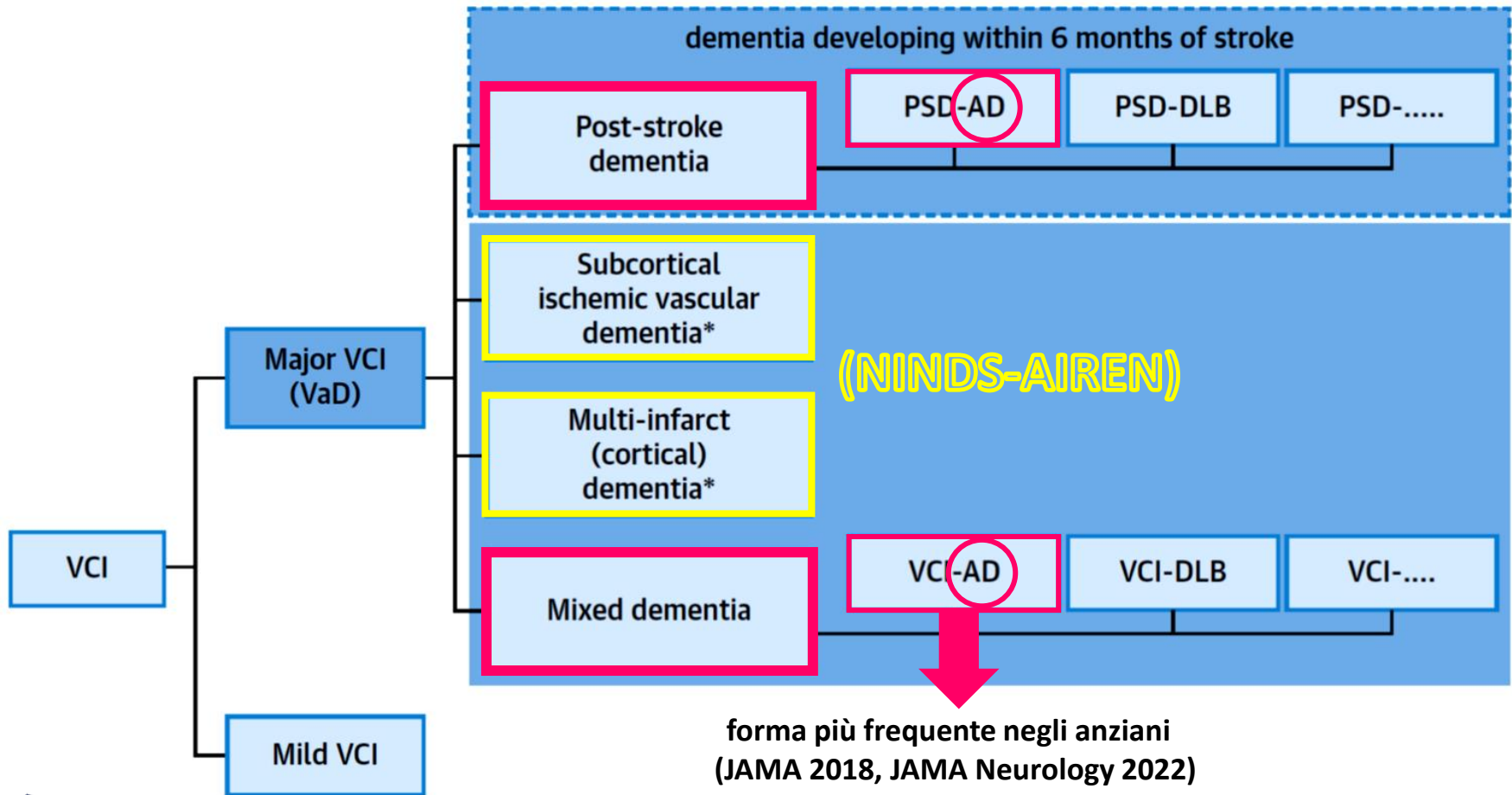


## B. «Adaptive Response» Hypothesis»



# Vascular Cognitive Impairment and Dementia

## JACC Scientific Expert Panel - 2019



# Frequency and Underlying Pathology of Pure Vascular Cognitive Impairment

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1767 Soggetti – 67% donne – età media alla morte 89 anni

## PATOLOGIA CEREBRALE:

- **56% MISTA**

- **21% solo VASCOLARE** ←

- **23% solo NEURODEGENERATIVA**

## DETERIORAMENTO COGNITIVO:

- **78% nel gruppo MISTA**

- **67% nel gruppo NEURODEGENERATIVA**

- **42% nel gruppo VASCOLARE** ←

# Frequency and Underlying Pathology of Pure Vascular Cognitive Impairment

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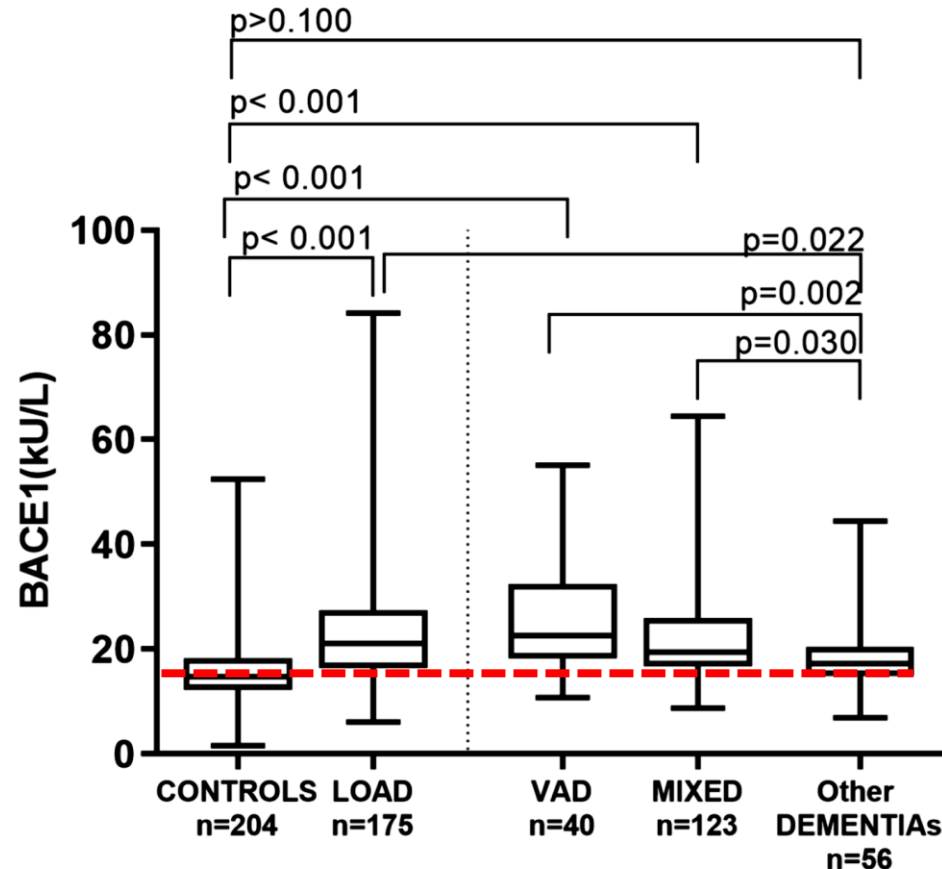
## **NEL GRUPPO VASCOLARE:**

**La patologia cerebrovascolare spiega solo il 10% della variabilità del declino cognitivo ...**

OPEN

# Increased blood BACE1 activity as a potential common pathogenic factor of vascular dementia and late onset Alzheimer's disease

Giovanni Zuliani<sup>1</sup>, Alessandro Trentini<sup>2</sup>, Valentina Rosta<sup>2</sup>, Remo Guerrini<sup>3</sup>, Salvatore Pacifico<sup>3</sup>, Stefania Bonazzi<sup>1</sup>, Anna Guiotto<sup>2</sup>, Angelina Passaro<sup>1</sup>, Davide Seripa<sup>4</sup>, Giuseppe Valacchi<sup>2,5</sup> & Carlo Cervellati<sup>1</sup>✉



2020

nature

SCIENTIFIC  
REPORTS



# Person-specific contribution of neuropathologies to cognitive loss in old age

1079 partecipanti a *Religious Orders Study o Memory and Aging Project* (70% MCI/demenza, 30% normali).

1. **ALZHEIMER** 65.3% (NIA Reagan)
2. **Chronic macroscopic infarcts:** 36.0%
3. **Cerebral amyloid angiopathy:** 35.8%
4. **TDP-43:** 34.9%
5. **Atherosclerosis:** 32.2%
6. **Arteriolosclerosis:** 31.3%
7. **Chronic microinfarcts:** 30.0%
8. **Neocortical Lewy bodies:** 13.3%
9. **Hippocampal sclerosis:** 10.4%

## 236 combinazioni neuropatologiche diverse

# Person-specific contribution of neuropathologies to cognitive loss in old age

## Contributo medio (%) al disturbo cognitivo:

- **Pathologic AD:** **>50%**  
(dal 22.3% al 100% a seconda della presenza delle altre neuropatologie)
- **Lewy bodies:** **41.0%**
- **Hippocampal sclerosis:** **24.9%**
- **Macroscopic infarcts:** **20.1%**
- **Amyloid angiopathy:** **15.7%**
- **Atherosclerosis:** **18.5%**
- **Arteriolosclerosis:** **19.8%**

**La AD “pura” è rara = 9%**

**Quale rapporto tra aterosclerosi  
e Malattia di Alzheimer ?**



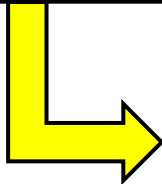
# BRAIN INFARCTION and the Clinical Expression of Alzheimer Disease. The Nun Study

Table 2.—Prevalence of Dementia for Participants Without and Participants With Brain Infarcts Who Met Neuropathologic Criteria for Alzheimer Disease\*

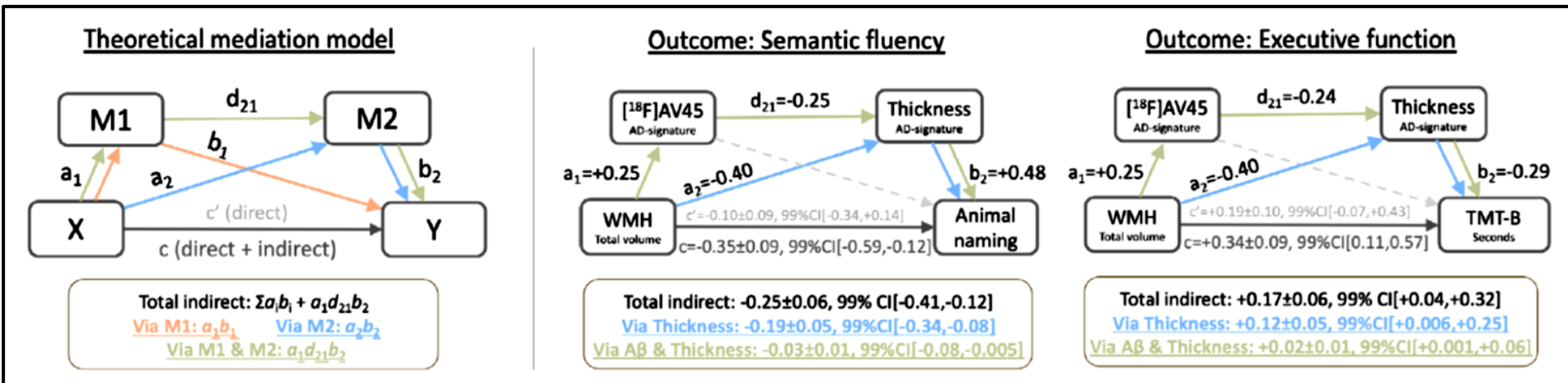
Type and Location of Infarct	Proportion Demented (No. Demented/No. at Risk)	Multivariate-Adjusted Odds Ratio for Dementia (95% CI)
1-2 Lacunar infarcts in basal ganglia, thalamus, or deep white matter	0.93 (14/15)	20.7 (1.5-288.0)
≥ 1 Large infarcts in lobes of neocortex	0.75 (9/12)	6.7 (0.9-48.3)
No brain infarcts	0.57 (21/37)	...

\*All 61 participants met the neuropathologic criteria for Alzheimer disease. Variables adjusted were age at the cognitive assessment, number of days between the assessment and death, attained education, and the mean number of neurofibrillary tangles in the neocortex. Lobes

LA NEUROPATOLOGIA AD (BA + TAU) E' NECESSARIA MA NON SUFFICIENTE



# Vascular burden and cognition: mediating roles of neurodegeneration and amyloid PET



Il rapporto tra WMH e Funzioni Cognitive è mediato dalla Atrofia Corticale (MRI) nelle regioni temporo-parietali, mentre NON viene evidenziata alcuna associazione con il metabolismo del glucosio (FDG-PET).

**WMH → ATROFIA CORTICALE → ↓ FUNZIONI COGNITIVE**

## Reported risk factors for AD

### Heart-related risk factors

Congestive heart failure  
Cardiac arrhythmia  
Hypertension  
Hypotension  
Thrombotic episodes  
High concentrations of homocysteine in the serum  
Atrial fibrillation  
Presence of *APOE*  $\epsilon$ 4 allele  
Atherosclerosis

### Peripheral risk factors

Smoking  
Alcoholism  
High serum cholesterol  
High intake saturated fat  
Diabetes mellitus  
Haemorheological abnormalities  
High cholesterol concentrations in the plasma

### Brain-related risk factors

Ageing  
Ischaemic stroke  
Silent stroke  
Head injury  
Transient ischaemic attack  
Menopause  
Migraine  
Lower education  
Haemodynamic abnormalities  
Depression

*“Sono tutti fattori di rischio “vascolari” che compromettono la perfusione cerebrale. Essi supportano fortemente l’ipotesi che una comprimissione della perfusione cerebrale sia il trigger primario nello sviluppo di AD”.*

Rotterdam Study

Kungsholmen project

EURODEM

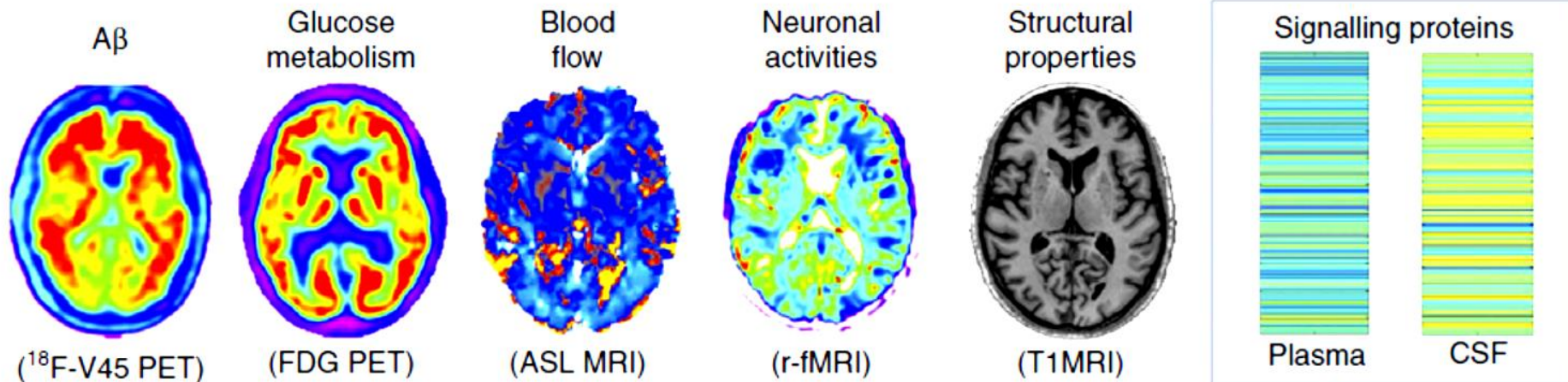
FINMONICA

Honolulu-Asia study

# Early role of vascular dysregulation on late-onset Alzheimer's disease based on multifactorial data-driven analysis

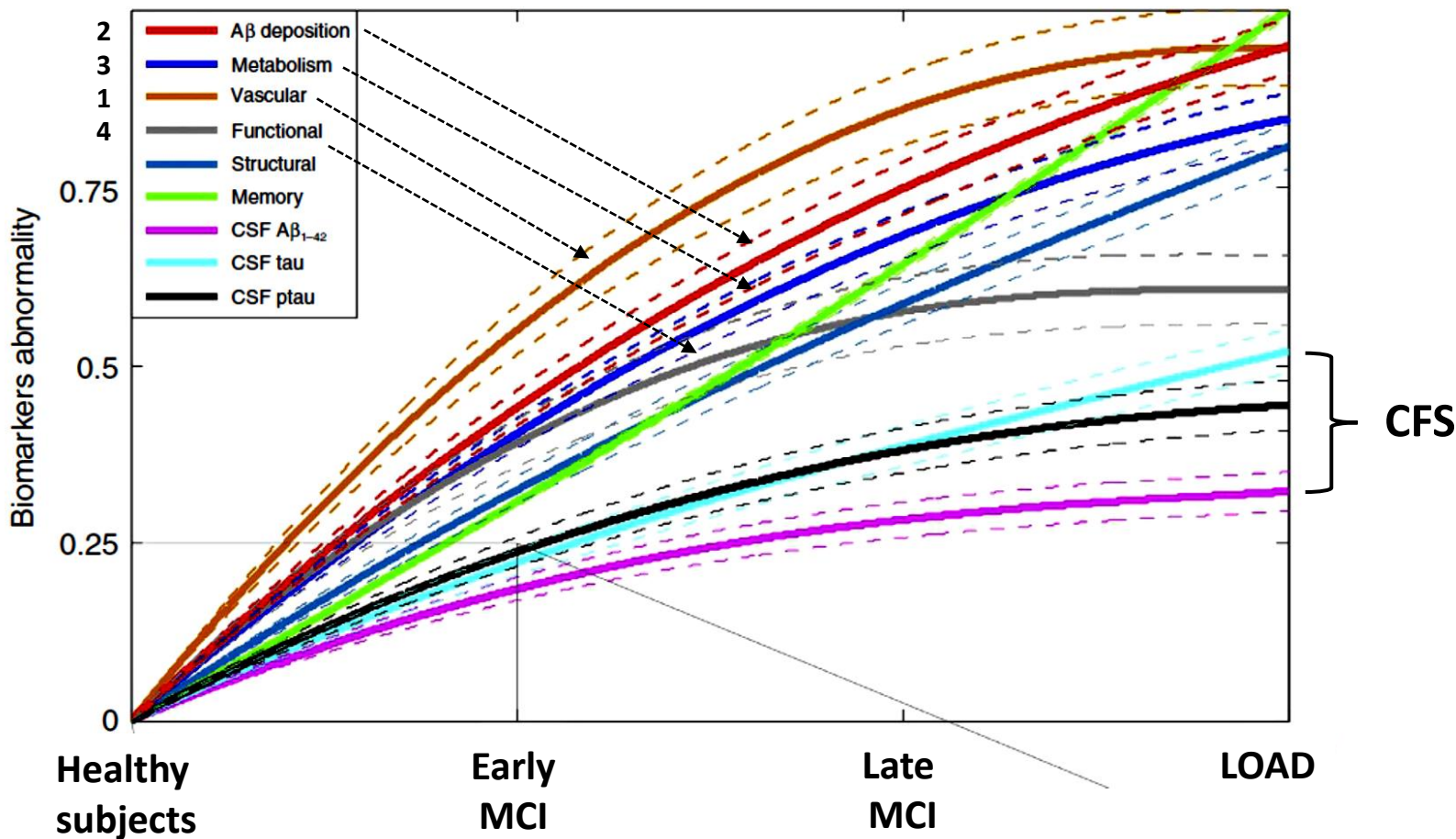
Y. Iturria-Medina<sup>1,2</sup>, R.C. Sotero<sup>3</sup>, P.J. Toussaint<sup>1,2</sup>, J.M. Mateos-Pérez<sup>1,2</sup>, A.C. Evans<sup>1,2</sup> & The Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative<sup>†</sup>

**1171 subjects - 7700 brain images - 10 plasma/cerebrospinal fluid biomarkers from the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative (ADNI)**

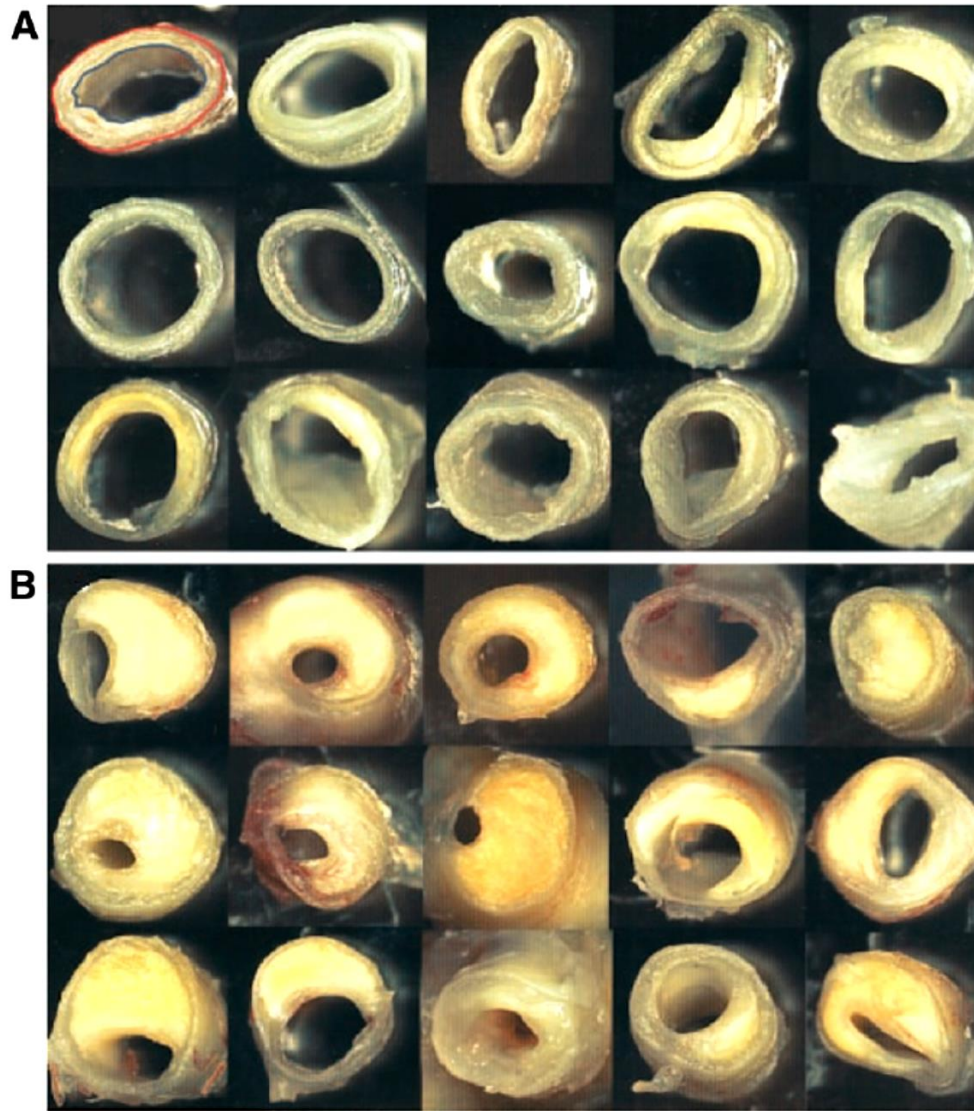


# Early role of vascular dysregulation on late-onset Alzheimer's disease based on multifactorial data-driven analysis

## Disease progressing with ageing



**CONTROLLI**

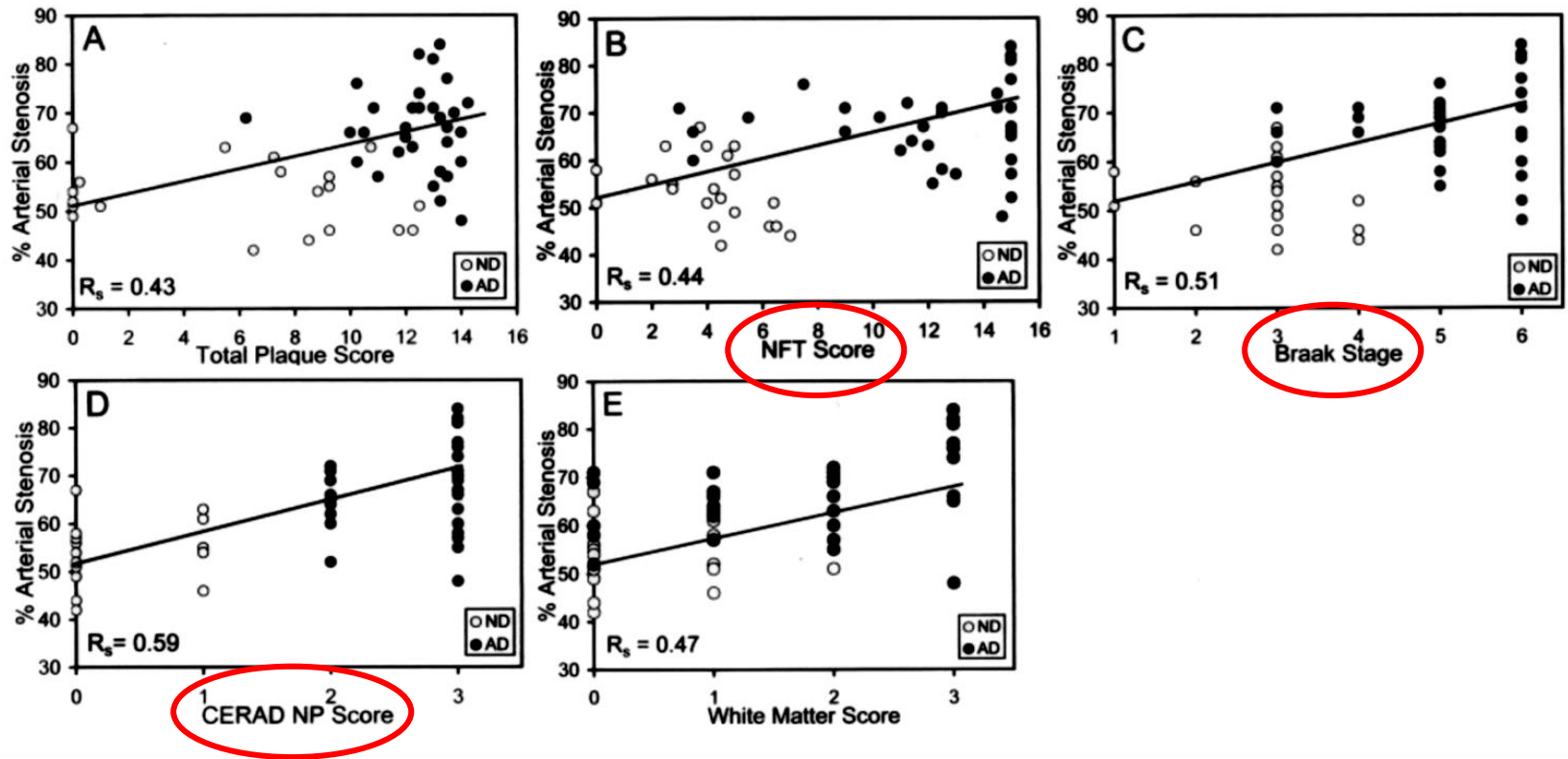


**MALATTIA DI  
ALZHEIMER**

**Figure 2** Occlusions of brain blood vessels ('circle of Willis') in controls and AD. Panel (A) shows cerebral arteries from non-demented elderly individuals, whereas Panel (B) shows arteries from AD patients showing atheromatous plaque deposition.

Roher et al. ATVB 2003

# Circle of Willis atherosclerosis is a risk factor for sporadic Alzheimer's disease



**Correlazione significativa tra ATS del circolo di Willis (% stenosi) e lesioni neuropatologiche della AD.**

# Atherosclerosis and AD: analysis of data from the US National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center - NACC

**1.054 individuals: 921 AD and 133 neuropathologically normal**

**Results:** There was NO association between neuritic plaques or neurofibrillary tangles, with either clinical history of stroke or presence of cerebral infarcts, SVD or arteriosclerosis ...

**However, the presence of large-vessel disease or atherosclerosis was strongly associated with an increased frequency of neuritic plaques.**

**Conclusions: Atherosclerotic cerebrovascular disease may have a role in the pathogenesis of Alzheimer's disease because of a strong association with frequent neuritic plaques.**

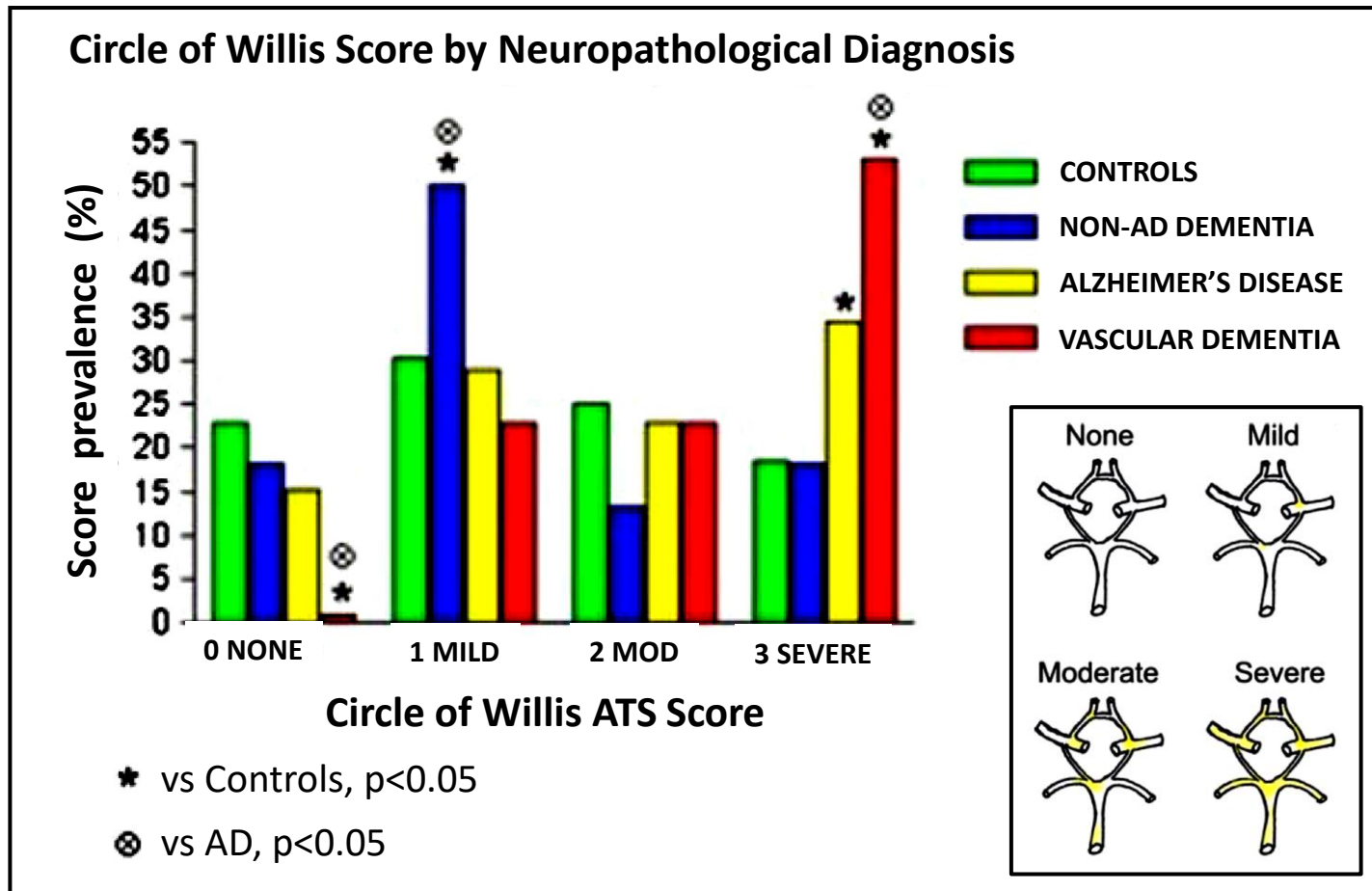


Honig et al. Neurology 2005





# Circle of Willis atherosclerosis: association with Alzheimer's disease, neuritic plaques and neurofibrillary tangles



# Circle of Willis atherosclerosis: association with Alzheimer's disease, neuritic plaques and neurofibrillary tangles

**0: none - 1: mild - 2: moderate - 3: severe**

**Table 2** Odds ratios for disease diagnosis with each unit increase in circle of Willis atherosclerosis grade, using the control group as reference

Non-AD versus control	AD versus control	VaD versus control
1.02 ( $P = 0.92$ ; 0.72–1.40)	1.31 ( $P = 0.02$ ; 1.04–1.69)	2.50 ( $P < 0.001$ ; 1.52–4.10)

All results are adjusted for age, gender and presence of the apolipoprotein E-ε4 allele. Probability and 95% confidence intervals are shown in parentheses.

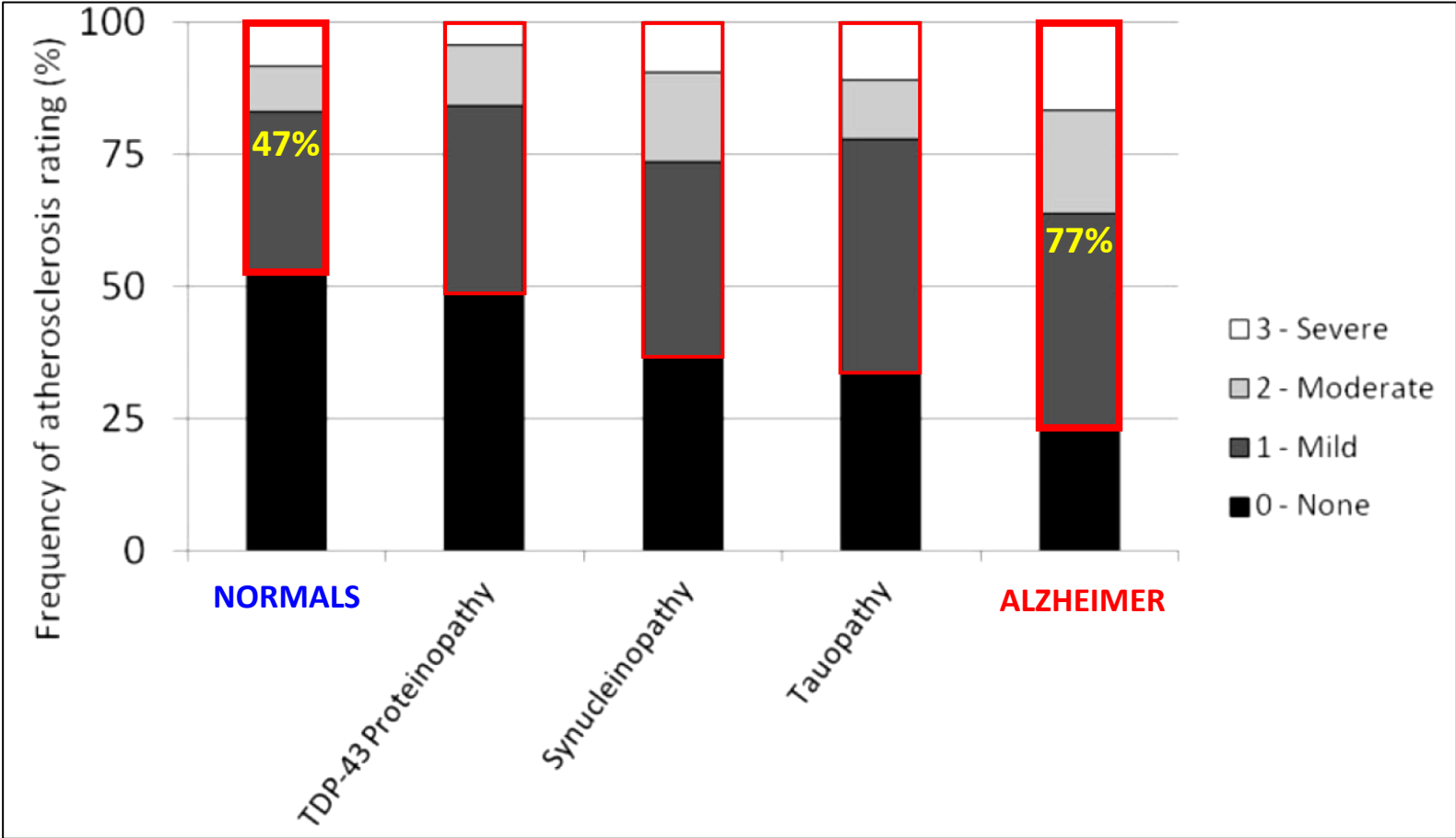
**Table 3** Odds ratios for the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease versus control, comparing each of the groups having atherosclerosis scores of 1, 2 or 3 with the group with atherosclerosis score 0

Atherosclerosis score 1 versus 0	Atherosclerosis score 2 versus 0	Atherosclerosis score 3 versus 0
1.36 ( $P = 0.20$ ; 0.66–2.79) $N = 138$ →	1.43 ( $P = 0.17$ ; 0.67–3.05) $N = 132$ →	2.30 ( $P = 0.02$ ; 1.02–5.20) $N = 134$

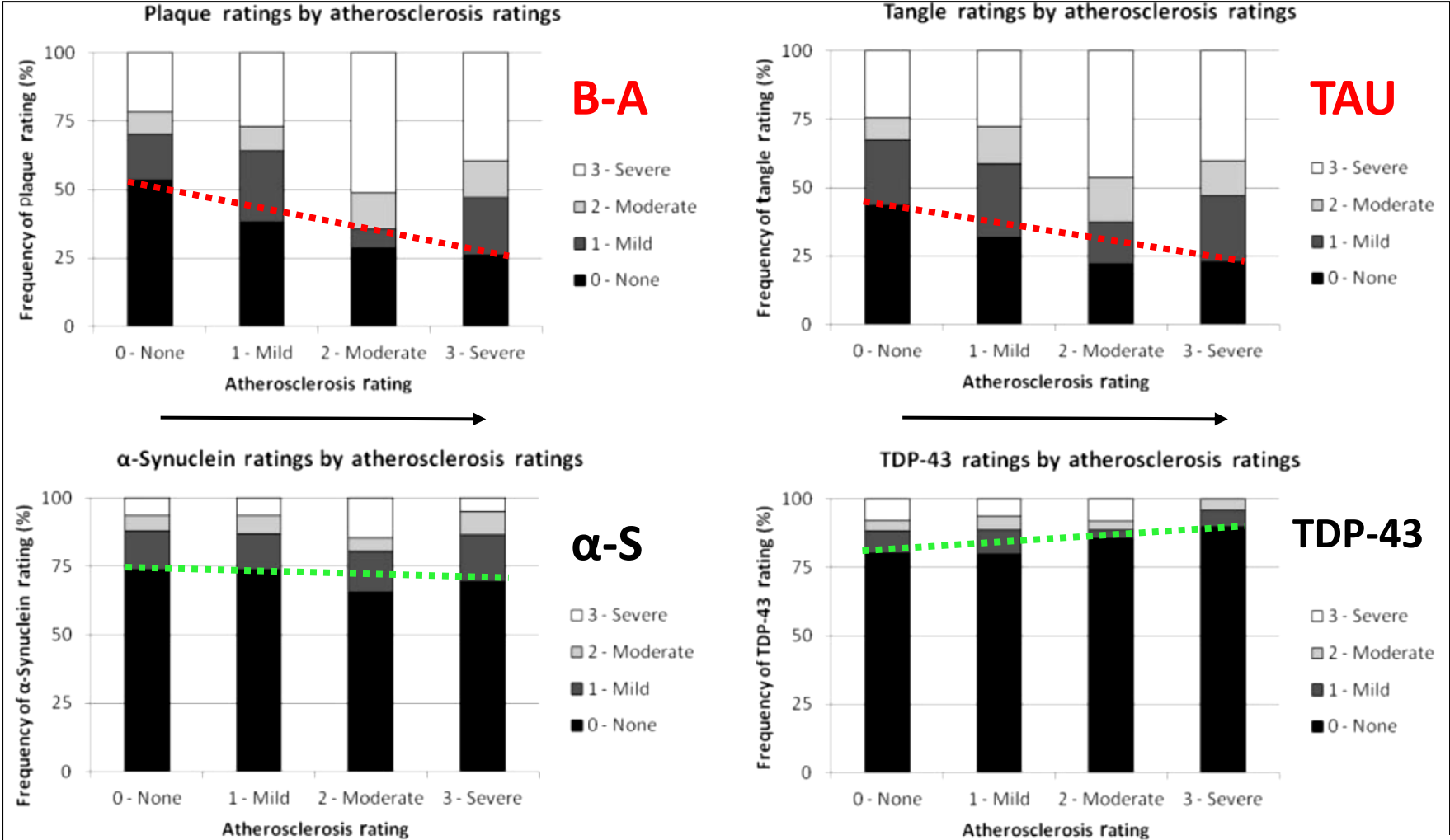
**Associazione significativa tra ATS intracranica e AD.  
L'ATS del circolo di Willis NON è aumentata nei pazienti con demenze non-AD: questo dimostra che l'associazione NON è spuria.**



# Cerebrovascular atherosclerosis correlates with Alzheimer pathology in neurodegenerative dementias



# Cerebrovascular atherosclerosis correlates with Alzheimer pathology in neurodegenerative dementias



# Cerebrovascular atherosclerosis correlates with Alzheimer pathology in neurodegenerative dementias

*“ ... These results provide further confirmation and specificity that vascular disease and Alzheimer’s disease are interrelated and suggest that common aetiologic or reciprocally synergistic pathophysiological mechanisms promote both vascular pathology and plaque and tangle pathology”.*

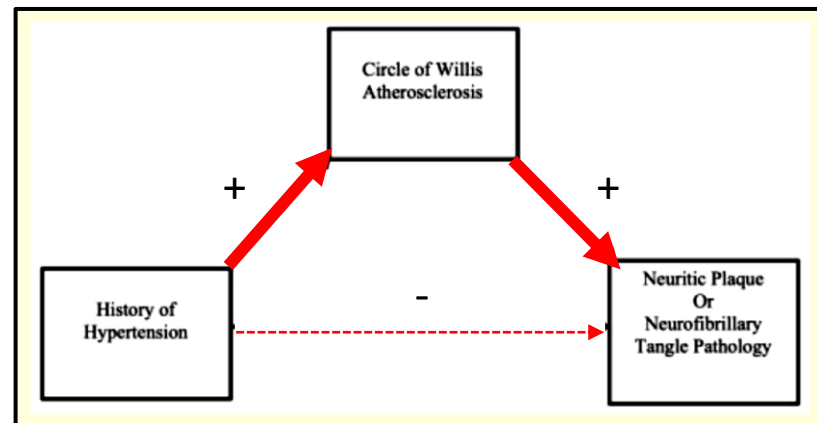
**BRAIN**  
A JOURNAL OF NEUROLOGY

# Hypertension and Alzheimer's disease: indirect effects through circle of Willis atherosclerosis

## BRAIN COMMUNICATIONS

	HTN → atherosclerosis	Atherosclerosis → ADNP	HTN → ADNP	HTN → atherosclerosis → ADNP
Overall sample (N = 2198)				
Neuritic plaques	1.29 (1.07–1.54)**	1.20 (1.09–1.32)***	0.73 (0.59–0.89)**	1.01 (1.004–1.03)*
Neurofibrillary tangles	1.29 (1.07–1.54)**	1.13 (1.02–1.24)*	0.82 (0.62–0.97)*	1.01 (1.001–1.02)*
Alzheimer's dementia sample (N = 1587)				
Neuritic plaques	1.29 (1.05–1.58)*	1.31 (1.15–1.47)***	0.85 (0.67–1.04)	1.01 (1.003–1.03)*
Neurofibrillary tangles	1.29 (1.05–1.58)*	1.18 (1.03–1.35)*	0.94 (0.71–1.22)	1.01 (1.001–1.02)*
MCI sample (N = 239)				
Neuritic plaques	1.15 (0.54–2.50)	0.97 (0.69–1.36)	0.98 (0.45–2.18)	1.00 (0.95–1.03)
Neurofibrillary tangles	1.15 (0.54–2.50)	1.13 (0.76–1.58)	1.53 (0.66–3.27)	1.00 (0.98–1.05)
Normal cognition sample (N = 372)				
Neuritic plaques	1.63 (0.95–2.75)	1.00 (0.80–1.26)	0.70 (0.40–1.25)	1.00 (0.94–1.04)
Neurofibrillary tangles	1.63 (0.95–2.75)	0.85 (0.67–1.08)	0.98 (0.54–1.73)	0.99 (0.94–1.003)

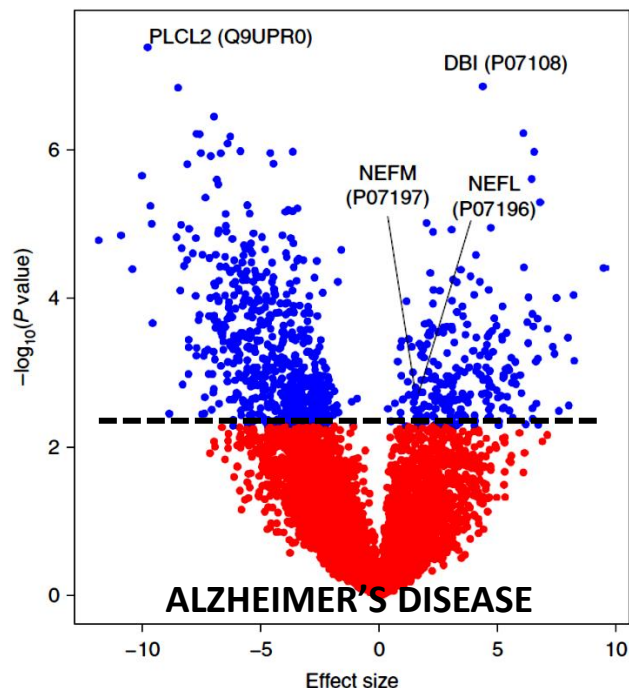
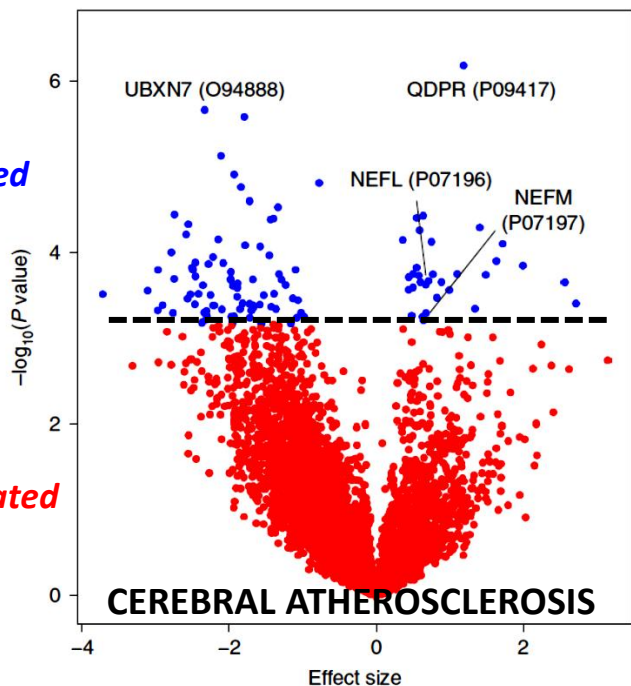
- ❑ 2198 soggetti - NACC
- ❑ Età media ultima visita: 80 anni
- ❑ 47% donne



# Shared proteomic effects of cerebral atherosclerosis and Alzheimer's disease on the human brain

*Proteome-wide association study (PWAS)*  
438 older subjects

nature  
neuroscience



Blue: associated

Red: not associated

Wingo et al.  
NATURE  
NEUROSCIENCES  
2020

More abundant in greater CA and AD  
ANLN (Q9NQW6)\*, ATG4C (Q96DT6), CBR1;SETD4 (P16152)\*, CPM (P14384)\*, CYB5R2 (Q6BCY4)\*, ENDOD1 (O94919)\*, NEFL (P07196)\*, NEFM (P07197)\*, NPEPPS (P55786), QDPR (P09417), TUBB4A (P04350)

Less abundant in greater CA and AD  
AKAP5 (P24588), ARHGEF9 (O43307), BABAM1 (Q9NWW8), DAB2IP (Q5VWQ8), HMGB3 (O15347), IGSF9B (Q9UPX0), LZTS3 (O60299), PROSAP1 (O60299), MAGI2 (Q86UL8), PCSK1 (P29120), RASAL2 (Q9UJF2), TBC1D24 (Q9ULP9), TLN2 (Q9Y4G6)

**23 proteine sono associate sia alla ATS cerebrale che alla M. di Alzheimer suggerendo meccanismi patogenetici comuni**



# Cerebral atherosclerosis contributes to Alzheimer's dementia independently of its hallmark amyloid and tau pathologies

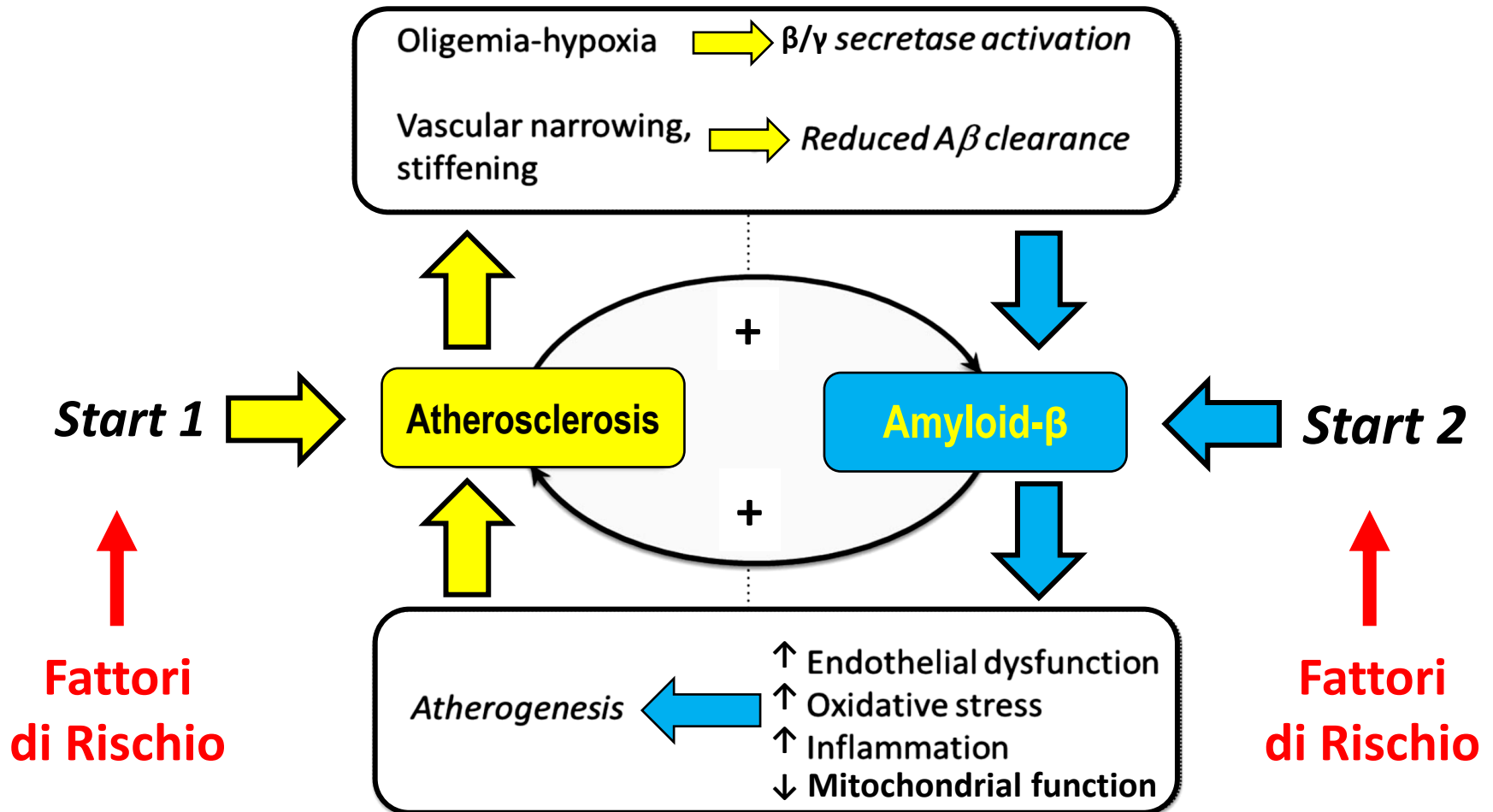
- ❑ La ATS (circolo di Willis e arterie prossimali) è legata a AD attraverso modificazioni proteomiche della corteccia prefrontale (NB: indipendentemente da  $\beta$ A, Tau, TDP-43, corpi di Lewy, angiopatia amiloide, macro-microinfarti e sclerosi ippocampale).
- ❑ Anche Tau è legata alla AD in modo indipendente, attraverso modificazioni proteomiche in parte sovrapposte alla ATS.
- ❑ ATS, Tau e  $\beta$ A sembrano contribuire a AD in modo indipendente (non vi è interazione statistica)



# Come spiegare l'associazione tra Aterosclerosi e malattia di Alzheimer ?

1. *Fattori di rischio vascolare comuni = patogenesi comune?*
2. *Amiloide & disfunzione endotelio ↓ Metabolismo cerebrale*
3. *ATS → Ipossia ↑ Attività BACE1 ↑ Amiloide*
4. *↓ NOCTH → alterazione microcircolo ↔ ↑ Amiloide*
5. *↓ Flusso cerebrale & ↑ rigidità arteriosa ↑ Amiloide & tau*
6. *ATS & Ipossia ↓ Clearance della Amiloide*

# Potenziale e pericoloso circolo vizioso tra arterio/aterosclerosi e malattia di Alzheimer



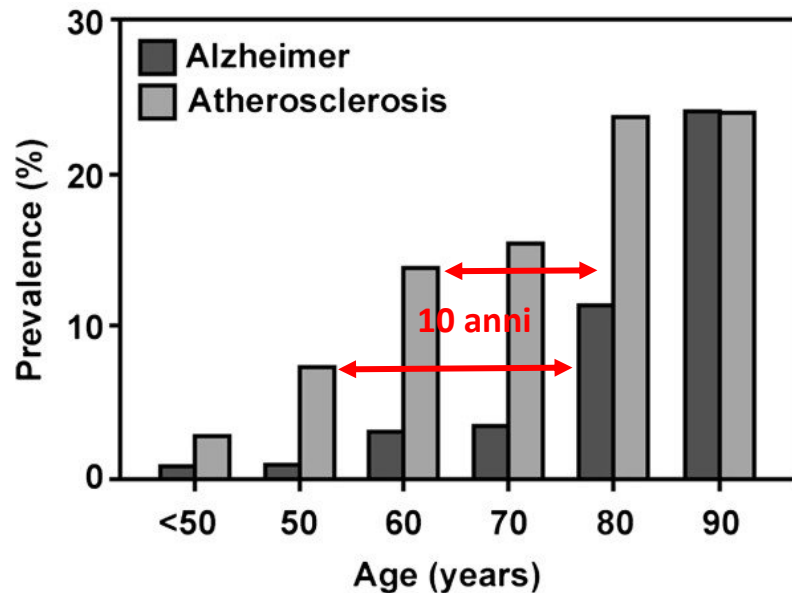
MODIFICATA DA: Gupta & Iadecola Front Aging Neurosc 2015

# ATS → NEUROPATHOLOGIA AD → LOAD

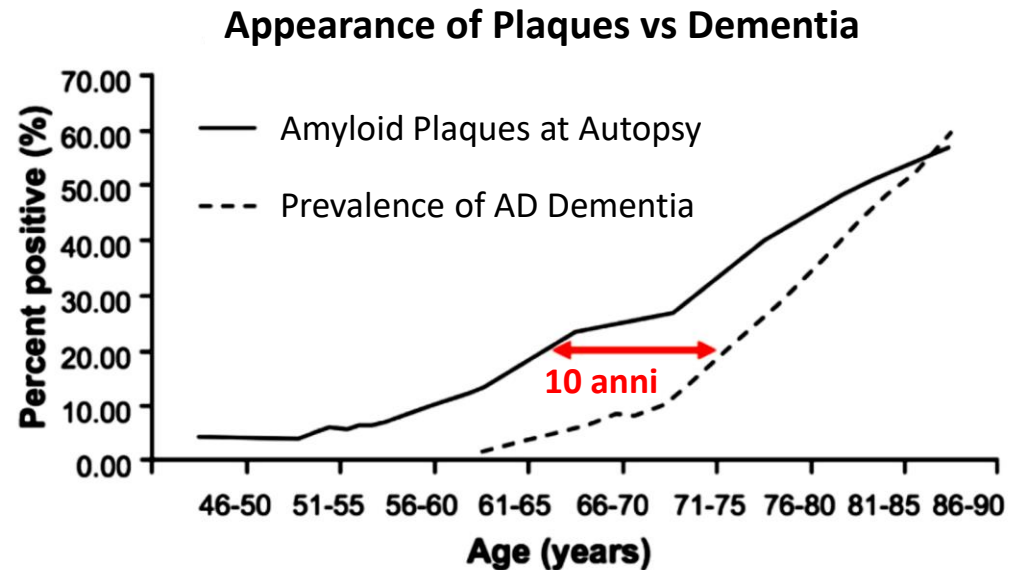
50-60 anni

60-70 anni

70-80 anni



Lathe et al. BMC Geriatrics 2014



Mintum & Morris, Washington University