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Abstract

Poster Session C

Friday, November 15, 2019 8:00 am – 9:30 am

AGING AND DEMENTIA: HEALTHY AGING AND COGNITION

C-23
Impact of Social Support on Cognitive Vascular Risk Factors in Latino Older Adults
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Objective: Central Americans have a cardiovascular disease (CVD) health advantage, as they are half as likely to carry CVD as European Americans, despite having an equivalent degree of vascular risk factors (VRFs). We examined the impact of social support on this paradox and the relationship to cognitive decrements among Costa Rican older adults. Methods: We identified predictors of the CVD health advantage (VRFs in the absence of CVD: Heart Attack, MI, Stroke). Hypertension (HTN) and CVD were coded as present or absent based on medical history. Of 315 participants, 146 (46%) had HTN but no CVD, 59 (19%) had CVD, and 110 had neither HTN nor CVD. To estimate ROC curves, we applied canonical discriminant analysis to item groups based on the discipline cluster. The discriminant analysis identified items that maximally differentiated the diagnostic groups in a step-wise fashion. Results: Social support and social engagement were stronger predictors of the health advantage than subjective memory complaints. Social Support was a reliable indicator of CVD health advantage (accuracy = 93%, sensitivity = 93%, specificity = 89%). Social Engagement was a reliable discriminator of diagnostic groups (accuracy = 84%, sensitivity = 88%, specificity =75%) versus subjective memory complaints (accuracy = 79%, sensitivity of 82%, specificity of 74%). Conclusion: Our exploratory analyses suggest that social support is an important predictor of living with VRFs but not developing CVD. Current studies are underway to examine the contribution of these risk factors to the development of dementia and cognitive impairment to maximize cost-effective interventions.