



MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA  
INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

NHMS 2025

## NATIONAL HEALTH AND MORBIDITY SURVEY (NHMS) 2025

# OLDER PERSONS HEALTH

## KEY FINDINGS

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Older Persons Health : Key Findings

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# 1

## OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY






- The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) was first conducted in 1986
- Nationally representative, community-based annual health survey of the population in Malaysia
- Samples randomly selected by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)
- In **2025**, the NHMS focused on **older persons** for the **second time** with the first survey done in 2018.

### WHY WAS NHMS 2025 CONDUCTED?



- In 2025, it was estimated that approximately **4.1 million** individuals in Malaysia were aged 60 years and older
- Malaysia is expected to be an aged nation by 2036
- Evidence on older persons health related issues required for policymaking.

### SURVEY SAMPLE AND PROCESS

-  **TARGET POPULATION**  
Older persons (60 years and older)
-  **ENUMERATION BLOCKS**  
165 (across all states)
-  **FIELD DATA COLLECTION**  
July - September 2025
-  **STUDY SAMPLE**  
7,528 respondents
-  **RESPONSE RATE**  
72.5%

### METHODS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION



Face-to-face interviews



Self-administered questionnaires



Anthropometry measurement



Clinical assessment

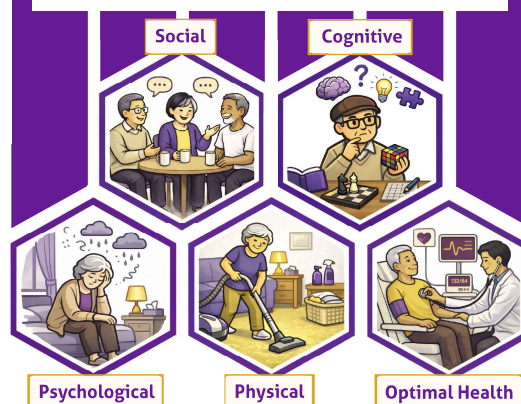
# 2

## Beyond Longevity: Ageing Well in Malaysia

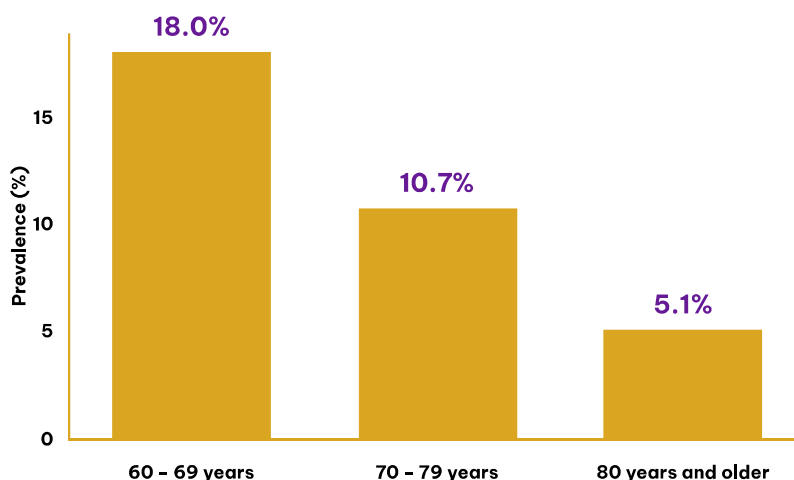
An older person ages well if they meet all the criteria below:

- 1 High social support
- 2 Not cognitively impaired
- 3 Not depressed
- 4 Able to perform daily activities independently
- 5 Absence or controlled chronic diseases

Only **14.7%** older persons in Malaysia are ageing well



### Ageing well declines with age



Ageing well is about quality of life, not just quantity of years

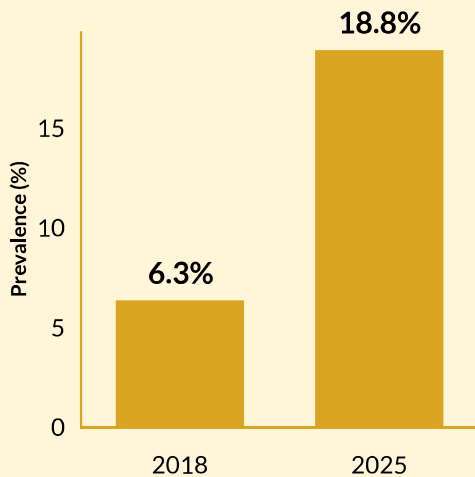
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## LIVING ALONE & STAYING CONNECTED

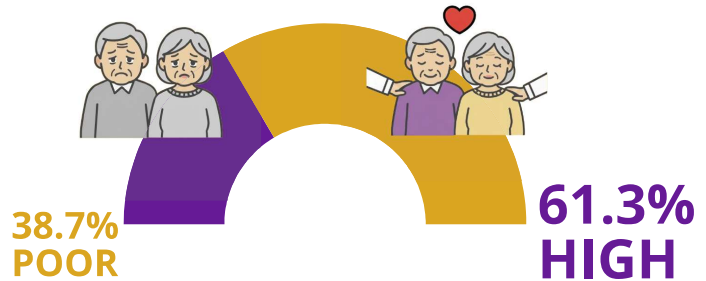
**Social support** is important to maintain a good **quality of life**.



There is a **rising number** of older persons **living alone**



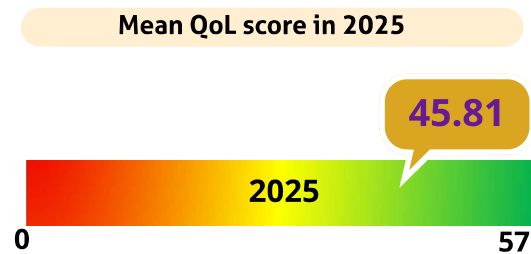
### Social support among those living alone



#### Social Support

Help, care, and connections we receive from family, friends, and the community.

### Quality of Life (QoL) among those living alone



\*Higher scores indicates better Quality of Life

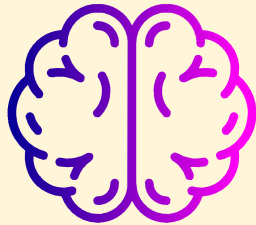
#### Quality of Life (QoL)

The happiness and well-being we experience in our health, mind, and daily life.

**Living Alone + Strong Social Support = Good Quality of Life**



## WHEN MEMORY FADES



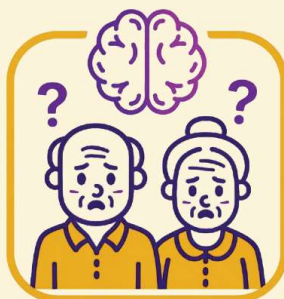
### What is dementia?

- Linked to **cognitive impairment**, where the brain has difficulty thinking clearly
- May forget things, feel confused or lost, struggle with conversations, and find daily tasks hard to manage.



**1** in **10** older persons  
in Malaysia have **DEMENTIA**

### Who is at higher risk?



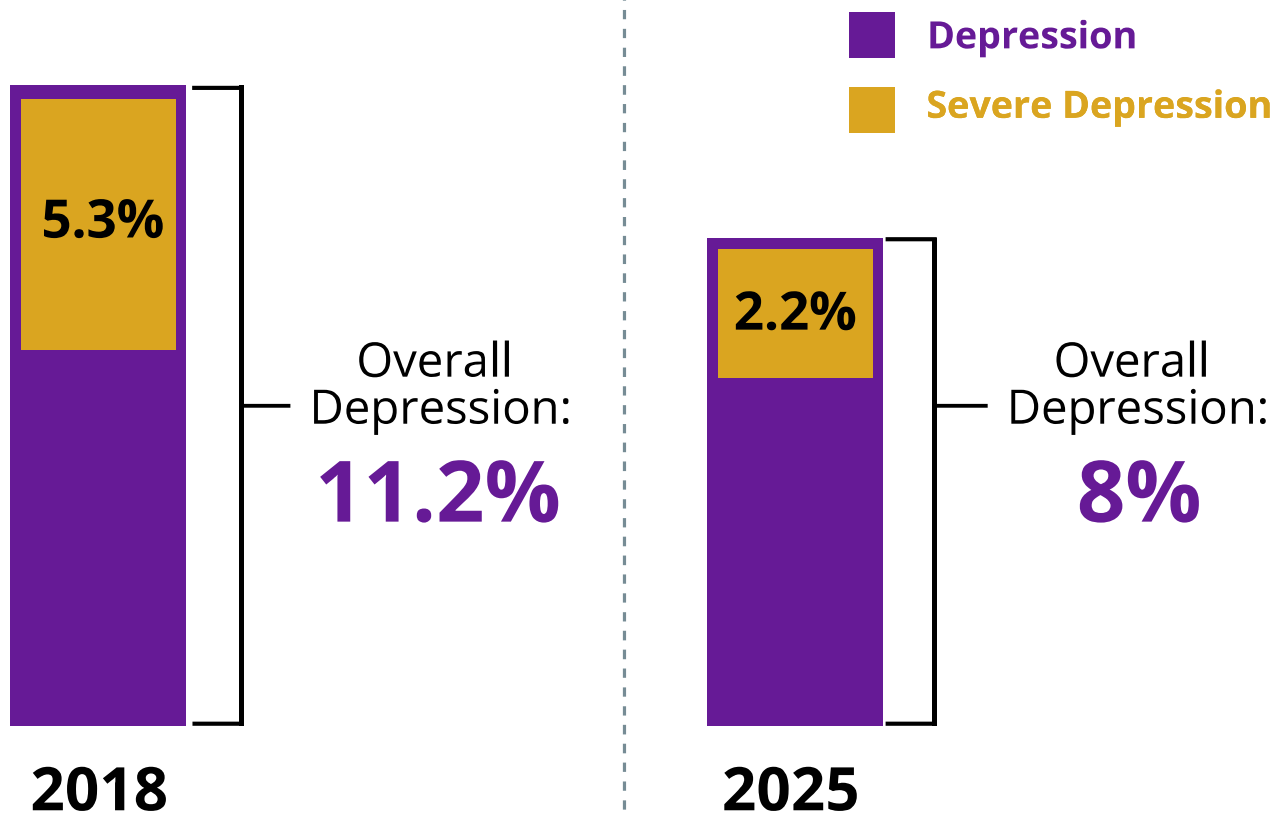
60 - 69 years	<b>5.0%</b>
70 - 79 years	<b>12.6%</b>
80 years and older	<b>34.9%</b>

**Do not let dementia steal your memories**

# 5

## DEPRESSION AMONG OLDER PERSONS: THE SILENT REALITY

How common is **depression**, including **severe depression**?



Where is depression more common?



Rural (11.1%)



Urban (7.0%)

The golden years are meant to be free from silent suffering. Older persons psychological wellbeing matters

# 6

## ARE OLDER PERSONS LIVING INDEPENDENTLY?

**1 in 4**



have limitation in performing **INSTRUMENTAL** activities of daily living (IADL) such as:



Using telephone



Laundry



Food preparation



Shopping



Transport



Managing medications



Housekeeping



Handling finance

**1 in 10**



have limitation in performing **BASIC** activities of daily living (ADL) such as:



Mobility



Climbing stairs



Transferring



Dressing



Feeding



Bathing



Grooming



Bowel



Bladder



Toileting

2018

**33%**



2025

**27%**

2018

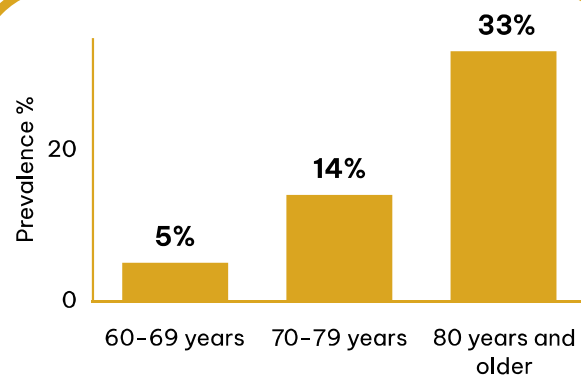
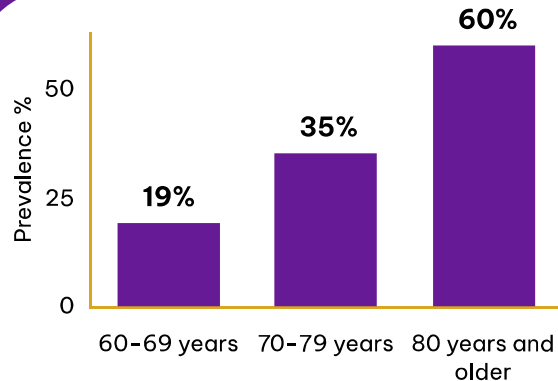
**17%**



2025

**10%**

Increases with age



**Growing older, staying independent**



# AGEING WITH NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs)



**39%**  
have  
**DIABETES**

**1 in 2**

with known diabetes have  
**UNCONTROLLED** blood sugar



**73%**  
have  
**HYPERTENSION**

**1 in 2**

with known hypertension have  
**UNCONTROLLED** blood pressure



**76%**  
have  
**HIGH CHOLESTEROL**

**1 in 3**

with known high cholesterol  
have **UNCONTROLLED**  
total cholesterol

**30%**  
have **ALL THREE NCDs**

## NCDs

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- High cholesterol

**68%**  
have **at least TWO NCDs**

**Live longer and better by keeping chronic diseases under control**



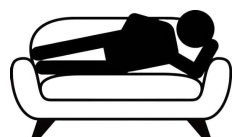
## EVERY MOVE COUNTS: MOVE MORE, SIT LESS

# 3 in 10



older persons are  
**NOT**  
**PHYSICALLY**  
**ACTIVE**

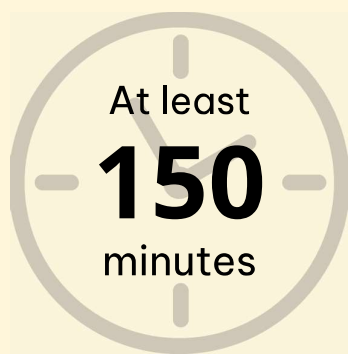
**Sedentary behaviour** means any activity done while sitting or lying down when you are awake, **excluding sleep.**



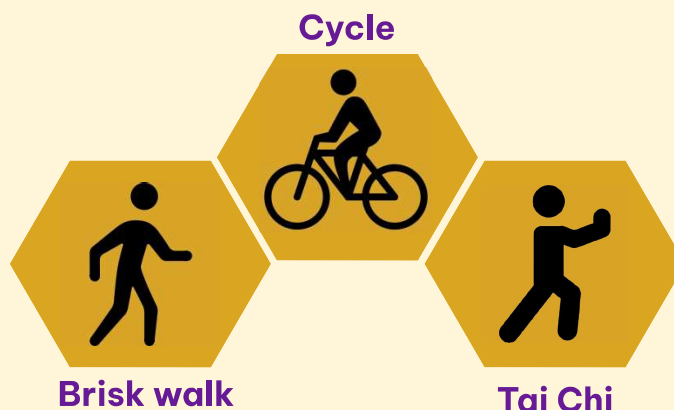
# 1 in 10

older persons are engaging in  
**HIGH SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR\***  
(\*8 hours and more of total sedentary time per day)

### Be physically active !



**moderate-intensity**  
activity per week



**Brisk walk**

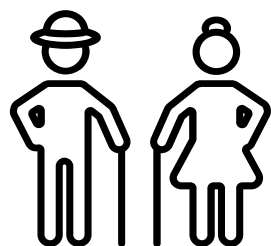
**Tai Chi**



# FRAILTY: BEYOND THE NORMAL AGEING

**2.4 MILLION**  
(60%) of  
older persons

are **AT RISK OF FRAILITY.**

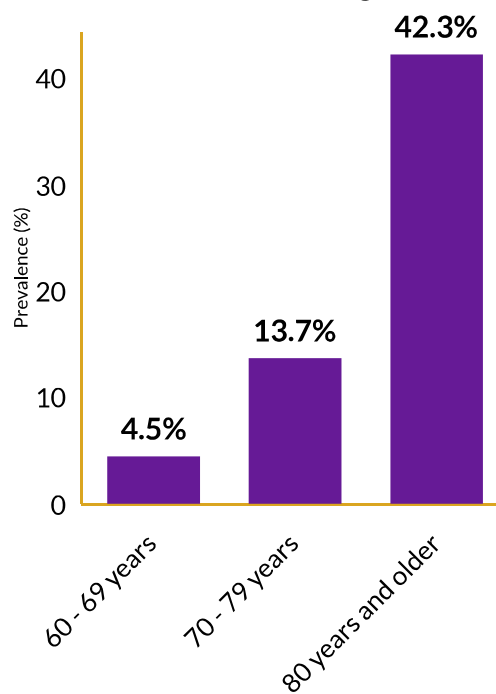


**420,000**  
(11%) of  
older persons

are **CURRENTLY LIVING WITH FRAILITY.**



Increases with age

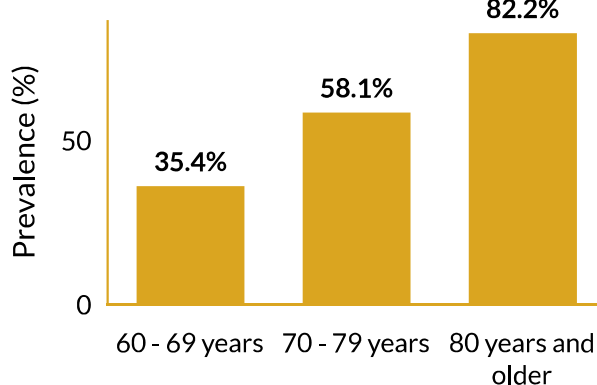


## SARCOPENIA

muscle loss and weakness usually occurring as a person ages

**45%**  
older persons  
are **HAVING SARCOPENIA**

Increases with age



**Prevent frailty, promote healthy ageing**



## CAREGIVERS ARE BURDENED



**1 in 3**

caregivers of dependent older persons **experience burden**

*A caregiver experiences physical, emotional, social, or financial burdens*

**26%**

of caregivers who care for older persons with **limitations in IADL** are **BURDENED**

**46%**

of caregivers who care for older persons with **limitations in IADL and ADL** are **BURDENED**

### Caregiver

An adult who lives in the same household and provides unpaid care to a dependent older person.

### IADL

Instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) include using the phone, meal preparation & laundry.

### ADL

Basic activities of daily living (ADL) include mobility, maintaining personal hygiene, dressing, feeding & continence management.

**Lend a hand. Caregivers need care too**



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