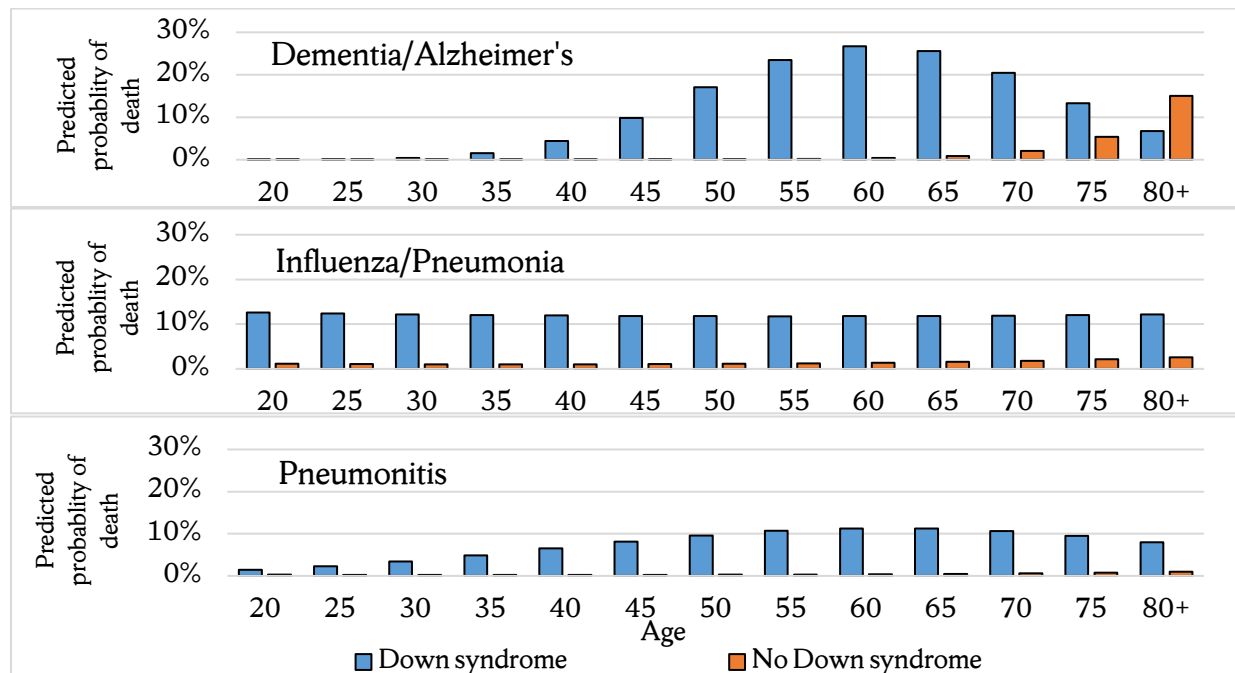


## Major Causes of Death among Adults with Down Syndrome

Scott D. Landes

Down syndrome is a genetic disorder resulting in a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21. On average, people with Down syndrome die at younger ages than those without this disorder. However, prior studies do not consider possible age differences in cause of death patterns between adults with and without Down syndrome. In the figures below, we compare age patterns in three major causes of death for adults with and without Down syndrome. Adults with Down syndrome have increased risk of death from Dementia/Alzheimer's beginning at earlier ages, and from Influenza/Pneumonia and Pneumonitis across the life course. As is detailed in our paper, we also found increased risk of death for adults with Down syndrome from respiratory failure and choking across the life course. Results from this study demonstrate that beyond needed attention to common risk factors such as heart disease and cancer, efforts to reduce premature mortality for adults with Down syndrome must attend to earlier onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, and increased risk of death from acute and chronic respiratory diseases, as well as choking related disorders at all ages.



Data Source: 2013-2017 U.S. Multiple Cause of Death Mortality files. More details about this study can be found in the peer-reviewed publication in the [Disability and Health Journal](#).

### About the Author

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