Introduction: The frailty syndrome is associated with adverse clinical outcomes independently of cognitive impairment. The recent easy-to-apply Study of Osteoporotic Fractures (SOF) criteria for frailty (1,2) could be useful to diagnose such syndrome also in Alzheimer's disease (AD) patients.

Aims: To determine the prevalence and correlates of frailty according to the SOF criteria among AD outpatients.

Methods: This cross-sectional study enrolled 109 community-dwelling outpatients aged 65+ (median age 84 years) consecutively diagnosed with AD in a geriatric memory clinic in Italy in 2009. Participants underwent a comprehensive geriatric assessment including frailty status evaluated by means of the SOF criteria. Multiple logistic regression analysis was performed to find correlates of frailty.

Results: Most participants had mild or moderate cognitive decline (median Mini-Mental State Examination score 18 out of 30). Frailty status was defined for all subjects: 25 (22%) were non-frail, 30 (28%) pre-frail and 54 (50%) frail. Independent correlates of frailty were dependence in bathing (odds ratio [OR] 26.8, \( p = 0.011 \)) and dressing (OR 6.8, \( p = 0.015 \)) after correction for age, sex, cognitive function, depression, comorbidity and the other basic activities of daily living.

Conclusions: Half of the older AD outpatients were suffering from the frailty syndrome. In order to provide appropriate prognostic evaluation and therapeutical advice all AD outpatients, especially those with specific disabilities, could be screened by means of the SOF criteria for frailty.

References:
