NACC Project #2007-JI-02 (Secondary Analysis of NACC data)
“Behavioral Reserve in MCI and AD”

Junior Investigator
Liana G. Apostolova, MD, University of California Los Angeles

ADC Director
Jeffrey L. Cummings, MD

Project Work Dates
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Project Description
Behavioral symptoms are a prominent feature of Alzheimer’s disease (AD) and mild cognitive impairment (MCI). They occur concomitantly with cognitive decline and progress as the disease evolves. Recent advances have suggested that subjects with higher education and occupational attainment may have more cognitive reserve and thus develop symptoms later in the disease course. Whether such phenomenon occurs for the neuropsychiatric symptoms of dementia has not been researched. We hypothesize that highly educated individuals who are typically more acutely aware of their cognitive decline will be more susceptible to depression, anxiety, irritability and apathy relative to those with lower educational attainment and that good social network and family support will likely offer relative protection from behavioral manifestations. We also hypothesize that older subjects will suffer from more behavioral symptoms relative to younger subjects. We propose to analyze the Neuropsychiatric Inventory (NPI-Q) data of patients with MCI and mild AD in separate logistic regression models. The results from this investigation will add new and exciting evidence for the existence of behavioral risk and protective factors in MCI and mild AD and will start the foundation of the behavioral reserve hypothesis.

Contact Information
For further information regarding this study, please contact:
Liana Apostolova, MD
University of California Los Angeles
email: lapostolova@mednet.ucla.edu
phone: (310) 794-2551
ADC website: http://www.adc.ucla.edu

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