

Is Joe Biden Cognitively Impaired? President Kamala Harris?

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*If elected president in November, **Joe Biden** will be age-78 when entering office in January.*

His political career since 1972 as US senator, vice president, and presidential aspirant elevated him to national prominence with high public name recognition.

He's only the fourth Catholic-faith (presumptive Dem) presidential nominee in US history — Jack Kennedy the only US Catholic president.

Biden was the only Catholic vice president. Now an evangelical protestant, Pence was raised Catholic.

Religion in US politics is much less of a factor than long ago, notably in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Thomas Jefferson, the third US president, notably was criticized for lacking religious conviction.

Catholicism was an issue for Jack Kennedy — based on the faulty notion that religion would interfere in the execution of his duties as president.

In 1960 v. Richard Nixon, JFK won the popular vote by a scant 113,000 majority, the Electoral College vote by a 303 to 219 margin.

According to Real Clear Politics, an average of polls in August shows **Biden favored over Trump by 7.5 points**, slightly down from an earlier 9 point advantage.

Some polls, including by Monmouth, Gu Politics, and YouGov, have Biden ahead by double-digits.

A mid-July Quinnipiac poll had Biden with a 15 point advantage over Trump.

No poll results are available so far since he chose Kamala Harris as a running mate.

Usually after these type announcements, presidential aspirants gain an approval bump, the same true after party conventions.

This year is unique in US political history, Dems and Republicans having virtual conventions.

For Dems, it's from August 17 - 20, Republicans holding theirs from August 24 - 27.

How this procedure affects polls remains to be seen.

Last May, Professor of Psychology Christopher Ferguson asked:

“What’s the probability that the next president will have dementia?”

Trump is the oldest first-term president in US history, currently age-74, showing no visible signs of slowing down physically.

According to Ferguson, there’s “an even chance of the next president experiencing cognitive decline,” adding:

Earlier US presidents had serious health issues.

After suffering a heart attack during his first term in office, Dwight Eisenhower was reelected for a second term.

Jack Kennedy was seriously ill numerous times in his life, three times given last rites.

Some close to him said “from a medical standpoint, (he) was a mess.”

Other US presidents were ill in office, some seriously.

Lincoln was elected to the nation’s highest office despite suffering from lifelong depression.

George Washington had health issues in office. John Adams was diagnosed with manic depression.

Jefferson, Madison, Chester Arthur, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan were ill in office.

Lincoln, FDR, Kennedy, William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, James Garfield, William McKinley, and Warren Harding died in office.

Ferguson explained that Reagan was diagnosed with alzheimer’s disease (the most common form of dementia) after leaving office, adding:

Symptoms began during his second term. The disease progresses slowly, most often not diagnosed until “noticeably impairing” daily activities.

Do Biden and Trump show signs of cognitive decline?

“Older adults may take longer to learn new technical things, may have more trouble forming new memories or paying attention to new tasks,” Ferguson explained.

“Speech fluency” may be adversely affected.

“Dementia involves cognitive decline in excess of what is expected for normal aging.”

“(I)t can also influence mood and decision making and cause paranoia and eventual loss of self-care.”

At times, Trump and Biden “mang(le) words,” but that alone doesn’t indicate dementia.

In the US today, dementia is less common than earlier, around “10%” for individuals in their

70s or older.

“Milder cognitive impairments not reaching the level of dementia may be more common” — one study indicating close to “20%” of people in this age category.

Ferguson: “(T)he probability of (Trump or Biden) having dementia is is about 10%, the probability that choosing between them will result in a presidency under the influence of dementia is about 19%.”

“If we combine that 10% with the approximately 20% likelihood of milder cognitive impairment for an individual in their age category (thus 30% chance of some impairment overall for each man), the probability that one or both candidates has either mild impairment or dementia goes up to about 51%.”

If America’s president has mild or more serious cognitive impairment, history shows that the bureaucracy in place maintains things without missing a beat.

Ferguson calls this reality a “small comfort perhaps against the madness of kings.”

Biden notably had brain surgery twice earlier.

According to Science Daily, “(m)ajor surgery is associated with a small long-term decline in cognitive functioning.”

Today’s Geriatric Medicine explained that “younger healthier patients may be able to bounce back easily (in contrast to) the cognitive impact on older adults.”

Biden’s brain surgery occurred when in his mid-40s, clearly not an old man at the time.

So-called POCD (post-operative cognitive decline) can be short or longer-term.

In 1988, Biden had brain surgery twice to relieve severe neck pain caused by a pinched nerve, a viral infection, an aneurysm in the base of his brain, another aneurysm on the opposite side.

According to Capitol Hill physician Dr. John Eisold, he “recovered fully.”

Over the last dozen years, he reportedly experienced only minor health issues, including sinusitis and allergies.

According to Biden’s brain surgeon Dr. Neal Kassell, he suffered no brain damage from procedures performed.

His mangled and incorrect remarks at times give pause to others as to whether he shows signs of cognitive decline.

Enter **Kamala Harris**. Did Dem power brokers choose her with two possible scenarios in mind?

That if elected, Biden may be physically and/or cognitively unable to complete his term, or that at most he’d be a one-term president?

In either case or if Biden is elected, reelected and serves two terms in office, will she be

party standard bearer ahead?

Note: In December 2019, a joint letter to Congress by 350 psychiatrists and other mental health experts (the number since then more than doubled) warned that Trump exhibited signs of mental health deterioration, saying in part:

He considers “(a)ny slight or criticism a humiliation and degradation.”

“To cope with the resultant hollow and empty feeling, he reacts with what is referred to as narcissistic rage.”

“He is unable to take responsibility for any error, mistake, or failing.”

“His default in that situation is to blame others and to attack the perceived source of his humiliation.”

“These attacks of narcissistic rage can be brutal and destructive.”

“We implore Congress to take these danger signs seriously and to constrain his destructive impulses.”

Trump v. Biden in November is less about them, more about which right wing of the one-party state will control the executive branch for the next four years.

The same holds for Congress.

On issues of war and peace, corporate empowerment, along with other domestic and geopolitical ones mattering most, continuity is certain whenever US elections are held.

Names and faces change. Dirty business as usual always stays the same.

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