

World Trade Center Health Registry 2014 Annual Report





Dear Enrollees:

In this report, you will find recent Registry findings on diabetes, injury, depression, binge drinking and respiratory illnesses.

Currently, the Registry is preparing for its next major health survey, expected to launch in early 2015.

In addition, we are now surveying over 2,700 enrollees who reported in 2011-2012 that they were diagnosed with an autoimmune disease after 9/11. This research will help determine whether these conditions are related to 9/11 events.

To keep enrollees and the public informed, we have launched a new video series to explain research findings in simple, clear language. Additional videos will be released as new findings are published.

The Registry continues to encourage enrollees who report 9/11-related symptoms and conditions to apply to the WTC Health Program (WTCHP) for monitoring and treatment. Since July 2013, the Registry's Treatment Referral Program (TRP) has followed up with over 4,100 interested enrollees, directly assisting more than 1,500 with their WTCHP applications.

We continue to help enrollees document their eligibility for the WTCHP and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF).

If you have any questions, please contact **866-NYC-WTCR (866-692-9827)** or wtchr@health.nyc.gov, or visit nyc.gov/9-11HealthInfo.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Registry.

Sincerely,

Mark Farfel, ScD
Director

About the Registry

The World Trade Center Health Registry is the largest post-disaster public health registry in United States history, tracking the health of more than 71,000 people directly exposed to the World Trade Center (WTC) disaster. The Registry was established by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has funded the Registry since May 2009.

September 11th Victim Compensation Fund

On January 2, 2011, President Obama signed into law the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 (Zadroga Act). The Victim Compensation Fund provides compensation for any individual (or personal representative of a deceased individual) who suffered physical harm or was killed as a result of the September 11, 2001 disaster or the debris removal efforts that took place in the immediate aftermath. For more information, please visit <http://www.vcf.gov>.

The Registry's mission is to:

- Identify and track the long-term physical and mental health effects of 9/11.
- Share findings and recommendations with enrollees, the public, the WTC Health Program and policymakers.
- Respond to health concerns and assess gaps in care for 9/11-related health problems.
- Offer guidance to public health professionals in planning for future emergencies.

WTC Health Program

The federal WTC Health Program provides medical services for 9/11-related health problems at no cost to eligible responders and survivors. For more information, call 888-982-4748 or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/>.

Recent Registry Findings

- 1) **Respiratory Issues:** The Registry and specialists from the New York University (NYU)-Bellevue Hospital WTC Center of Excellence published findings from a study of lung function among enrollees who lived or worked in lower Manhattan and have persistent lower respiratory symptoms. The study found that 9/11-related dust exposure in the workplace and at home was a risk factor for persistent lower respiratory symptoms and decreased lung function seven to eight years after 9/11. The Registry and NYU-Bellevue recently completed data collection for a follow-up study to determine whether the symptoms and lung damage have improved, and, if not, what factors are causing the problems. Over 70 percent of the 780 eligible enrollees participated. Analysis of the findings will continue into 2015.
- 2) **Physical Injuries and Chronic Diseases:** Enrollees with injuries as a result of 9/11, including broken bones, burns, and head trauma, were found to be at increased risk of chronic disease five to six years later. This study included more than 14,000 adult enrollees who reported no previous diagnosis of heart disease, respiratory disease, diabetes or cancer. The nearly 2,000 enrollees who reported more than one type of injury were twice as likely to also report a respiratory illness as those who were not injured. Enrollees with multiple types of injuries and probable post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were three times more likely to report heart disease than those without injuries and PTSD.
- 3) **PTSD:** A study of 41,000 Registry enrollees found that about one in five suffers from PTSD 9 to 10 years after 9/11. About eight percent of study participants reported frequent binge drinking in

the past month. This figure is slightly higher than local and national data. Among Registry enrollees suffering from PTSD, 15 percent reported frequent binge drinking. Among enrollees without PTSD, six percent reported frequent binge drinking. People with higher levels of exposure to 9/11 were also more likely to report frequent binge drinking than people with lower exposure.

- 4) **PTSD and Diabetes:** A study of over 36,000 Registry enrollees found that those who had PTSD when they joined in 2003-2004 were 30 percent more likely to develop diabetes six to eight years later than people without PTSD. One explanation is that chronic stress reactions caused by PTSD can, over time, cause the body's cells to become resistant to insulin, causing sugar to build up in the bloodstream. PTSD has also been associated with unhealthy behaviors including poor diet and physical inactivity, both of which may increase the risk of developing diabetes.
- 5) **Mental Health Issues:** A study investigating the mental health care needs of 30,000 Registry enrollees 10 to 11 years after 9/11 found:
 - Over 15 percent reported having PTSD.
 - Nearly 15 percent experienced depression.
 - Ten percent had both conditions.

Enrollees who reported having both PTSD and depression were more likely to have increased 9/11 exposure, be unemployed, have lower social support and quality of life and have more unmet mental health care needs. It is common for traumatized populations to suffer from both PTSD and depression; the combination is often associated with functional impairment, greater symptom severity and disability.

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New Findings
Inside!

More Information on the Registry's Research

- Visit nyc.gov/html/doh/wtc/html/news/news-videos.shtml to view videos about the Registry's recent findings. Check this page periodically to view additional videos as new research findings are published.
- For a complete list of papers published by the Registry, visit nyc.gov/html/doh/wtc/html/studies/bibliography.shtml.

9/11 Treatment Referral Program (TRP)

The Registry's 9/11 TRP was created to help enrollees and others who might be eligible to get care for 9/11-related health problems at no out-of-pocket cost through the WTC Health Program.

So far, the Registry has helped over 1,500 enrollees find services and get care.

If you, a loved one or someone you know has a 9/11-related health problem, contact the Registry's 9/11 Treatment Referral Program at 888-WTC-7848 (888-982-7848).