

Complete Your Follow-Up Survey

The Health Department is now surveying Registry enrollees to learn more about their health status 6 years after the disaster. A separate survey has been sent to parents and guardians of enrollees younger than 18.

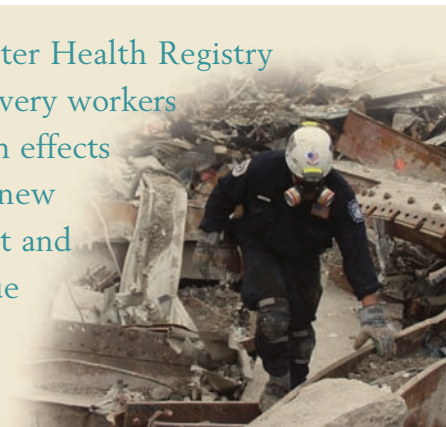
The follow-up survey will help determine to what extent physical and mental health conditions have persisted, and whether any new symptoms and conditions have emerged. An important goal of this survey is to identify and help address gaps in medical and mental health treatment.

So far, more than 63% (42,000 enrollees) have responded. Enrollees who lived closest to the WTC site on 9/11 have the lowest response rate. We especially encourage this group, along with other enrollees, to return their survey now. Surveys are due December 31, for enrollees and March 31, 2008, for parents and guardians of enrollees. The Registry will call enrollees who have not yet completed their surveys to schedule a time to complete them by phone.

Have questions about your or your child's survey? Call 1-866-692-WTCR (1-866-692-9827) or email wthcr@health.nyc.gov.

Health Problems Linger for Ground Zero Rescue and Recovery Workers

Recent findings from the World Trade Center Health Registry show that thousands of 9/11 rescue and recovery workers suffered serious respiratory and mental health effects 3 years after the disaster. The findings shed new light on the health effects of exposure to dust and debris among rescuers, and highlight the value of disaster preparedness and training for all types of emergency responders.^{1, 2}



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Very High Asthma Rates

One study of Health Registry data collected in late 2003 and 2004, shows that 3.6% (900) of the 25,000 workers enrolled in the Registry who were previously asthma-free developed newly diagnosed asthma within 2 or 3 years of the disaster, a rate 12 times higher than normal for the general adult population. Workers who arrived on 9/11 and worked more than 90 days reported the highest rate of new-onset asthma—7%, which is 24 times higher than normal.

Though respirator use increased as the cleanup progressed, many workers did not wear adequate protection at first. Workers who wore masks and respirators on 9/11 and 9/12 reported newly diagnosed asthma at lower rates (4%

and 2.9%, respectively) than those who did not (6.3% and 4.5%, respectively). The longer a person went without adequate respiratory protection, the higher the risk of new-onset asthma.

“The dust from the World Trade Center collapse appears to have had significant respiratory health effects, at least for people who worked at the site,” said Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., New York City Health Commissioner. “These findings reflect the critical importance of getting appropriate respiratory protection to all workers as quickly as possible during a disaster, and making sure that workers wear them at all times,” he said.

(continued)

High Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Rates

Registry findings also revealed that 1 in 8 workers (12.4%) had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) when they were interviewed in late 2003 and 2004, compared to a national rate of only about 4%.

The workers' PTSD rates varied significantly by occupation, ranging from 6.2% among police officers to 21.2% among volunteers.

Workers from non-emergency occupations, such as construction, engineering and sanitation, also suffered particularly high rates of PTSD, possibly because non-emergency workers are not usually trained in disaster preparedness, which can help buffer psychological trauma.

People who started rescue work on or soon after 9/11, or who worked for longer periods, were more likely to develop PTSD.

The study demonstrates the need for continued monitoring and care of exposed workers. It also provides important lessons to help emergency planners reduce the impact of future disasters, such as using shift rotations to reduce workers' time at emergency sites and providing mental health services to workers who have less prior exposure to trauma.

"Post-traumatic stress disorder can be devastating, affecting sufferers' families and work lives," said Dr. Frieden. "People with PTSD are also more likely to suffer from depression and substance abuse. The Registry helps us gauge the persistence of these problems. It also helps us inform the public and medical community about the health effects of 9/11, so that people can get the best possible care."

1. Wheeler, K., McKelvey, W., Thorpe, L., et al. Asthma Diagnosed After September 11, 2001 Among Rescue and Recovery Workers: Findings from the World Trade Center Health Registry. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 2007;10248. <http://www.ehponline.org/members/2007/10248/10248.pdf>. Accessed October 18, 2007.
2. Perrin, M., DiGrande, L., Wheeler, K., Thorpe, L., et al. Differences in PTSD Prevalence and Associated Risk Factors Among World Trade Center Disaster Rescue and Recovery Workers. *American Journal of Psychiatry*. September 2007;164(9):1385-1394. <http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/reprint/164/9/1385>. Accessed October 18, 2007.



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Events and Reminders

New York State Workers' Compensation Deadline Extended for 9/11 Workers

The deadline for Ground Zero workers and volunteers to register for New York State Workers' Compensation benefits has been extended to August 14, 2008. Workers and volunteers who have been affected by a WTC-related illness have the right to file a New York State Worker's Compensation claim. Call (877) 632-4996 for a registration form, or download one at www.wcb.state.ny.us/content/main/forms/WTC-12.pdf

WTC Disability Law: Deadline Extended for Eligible NYC Employees

The deadline for eligible NYC employees to file a Notice of Participation under the WTC Disability Law has been extended to June 14, 2009 (June 13 for Tier 3 Correction Officers). The WTC Disability Law provides a disability retirement benefit to eligible NYC employees who became disabled by participating in the WTC rescue, recovery or clean-up operations between September 11, 2001, and September 12, 2002. For more information about filing a Notice of Participation:

NYCERS: Call (347) 643-3000 or visit www.nycers.org

NYPD: Call (212) 693-5100 or visit www.nyc.gov/nycppf

FDNY: Call (718) 999-7041

Research Studies

WTC Residents and Building Occupants

The WTC Health Registry and NYU-Bellevue Hospital will conduct a study in Winter 2008 of some of the long-term health effects among WTC residents and building occupants. For more information, call 1-866-NYC-WTCR (1-866-692-9827).

Fatality Among WTC Responders

The New York State Department of Health, in cooperation with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), is collecting data on all deaths since 9/11 among WTC responders. For more information, call (518) 402-7900 or email khg01@health.state.ny.us

Exposure to Trauma: Children of First Responders and Evacuees

Columbia University researchers are seeking to identify the mental health needs of children of first responders (police, firefighters or emergency medical technicians) and WTC evacuees. First responders and WTC evacuees with children currently 9 to 15 years old may be eligible to participate. For more information, email Dr. Christina Hoven at ch42@columbia.edu or call (212) 543-5688 or (800) 774-8448.

Psychological and Brain Responses to the WTC Disaster

Researchers at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Medical College of Cornell University are studying brain and psychological responses to the WTC disaster in people who escaped from the disaster site or took part in the initial rescue effort. For more information, call (212) 746-3782.



A Public Information Resource



Rescue & Recovery Workers



Residents



Children



City Employees



Others Affected

Information about 9/11 Health Effects and Services is Available Online

For more information about:

- Free treatment for 9/11-related health problems
- The impact of 9/11 on physical and mental health
- Links to non-profit organizations
- Signing up for an e-newsletter about 9/11 health

Visit www.nyc.gov/911HealthInfo

Update Your Contact Information

Name: _____ Date of birth: ____/____/____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ - _____

Home: _____ Cell: _____

Work: _____ Email: _____

FIVE EASY WAYS TO REACH US

- **Write to:**
The World Trade Center Health Registry
NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
233 Broadway, 26th floor, CN 6W
New York, NY 10279
- **Visit** www.wtcregistry.org and click on "Contact Us"
- **Call** 1-866-NYC-WTCR (1-866-692-9827)
- **Email** wtchr@health.nyc.gov
- **Fax** (212) 788-4127

Confidentiality Policy

All Registry information is held in the strictest of confidence. The Registry is required by law to protect the confidentiality of your information.

For the latest WTC health news, visit www.nyc.gov/911HealthInfo. This is the final WTC Health Registry newsletter.