



Spring 2025

George Contreras: 9/11 Paramedic, Professor, and Registry Enrollee

George Contreras was a paramedic called to the scene of the World Trade Center (WTC) on September 11, 2001.



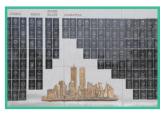
While attending to the injured, George barely escaped with his life. In a testimonial video, he recounts the events of that morning and how his experiences have affected him mentally and

Image courtesy of George Contreras

physically. He also shares how being an enrollee in the Registry has helped him get support.

Watch George's testimonial video and videos from other enrollees at **nyc.gov/site/911health/enrollees/**testimonial-videos.page.

Thirty-Two More FDNY Names Added to the WTC Memorial Wall



More than twenty years after the 9/11 disaster, the list of NYC Fire Department (FDNY) members who have died from 9/11-related illnesses has grown. Thirty-two firefighters who died from 9/11-related health issues were added to the

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WTC Memorial Wall at the Brooklyn FDNY headquarters in September 2024.

In all, more than 360 FDNY members have died from 9/11-related health issues after September 11, 2001. They are remembered along with the 343 FDNY members who died on 9/11.

The WTC Health Program's Nationwide Provider Network

The WTC Health Program's Clinical Centers of Excellence in NYC provide health services to survivors and responders residing in the New York metropolitan area for their certified 9/11-related health conditions.

The WTC Health Program also provides health care for people living outside the New York metropolitan area through the Nationwide Provider Network (NPN). People outside the New York metropolitan area who apply to the WTC Health Program are automatically enrolled in the NPN. The organization that currently runs the NPN is Managed Care Advisors (MCA)-Sedgwick.

After an applicant is accepted into the NPN, MCA-

Sedgwick will locate a health care provider affiliated with the WTC Health Program in the applicant's area.

If you live outside the New York metropolitan area and need 9/11-related health care, contact the Treatment Referral Program at **nyc.gov/site/911health/enrollees/9-11-treatment-referral-program.page**. Learn more about the WTC Health Program at **cdc.gov/wtc**.



World Trade Center Health Program Nationwide Provider Network

Our Latest Research Findings

Post-Traumatic Growth and Quality of Life 16 Years After 9/11 Among Registry Enrollees Residing in NYC

A recent study by the Registry found that 34.3% of enrollees showed moderate to high post-traumatic growth (PTG) after direct exposure to the 9/11 disaster. PTG refers to positive psychological changes that occur as a result of struggling with highly challenging life events.

We found that people who had greater social support, actively engaged in meaning-making and self-reflection, or found ways to reevaluate their values and priorities were more likely to experience PTG.

Despite the trauma of 9/11, these enrollees reported personal growth, such as increased appreciation for life, enhanced relationships, or a greater sense of personal strength.

Alper HE, Feliciano L, Millien L, Pollari C, Locke S. Post-traumatic growth and quality of life among World Trade Center Health Registry enrollees 16 years after 9/11. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022;19(15):9737. doi:10.3390/ijerph19159737



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Your Survey Responses Have Helped Advance 9/11-Related Health Research and Care



Image credit: Natalya Kosarevich / Shutterstock.com

The Registry remains at the forefront of public health research by actively monitoring long-term health outcomes in people who were exposed to the 9/11 disaster. Over the last two decades, five major health surveys (Waves 1 to 5, conducted in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2020), along with additional studies, have provided crucial data on chronic illnesses, respiratory conditions, and mental health disorders linked to 9/11 exposure. By continually assessing the long-term course of emerging and previously reported 9/11-related health conditions, the Registry has helped shape clinical guidelines and inform care provided by the WTC Health Program, ensuring long-term health services for thousands of people impacted by the disaster. As new conditions continue to emerge, the Registry remains an essential tool in safeguarding the health of 9/11 survivors and responders.

In addition to its ongoing surveys, the Registry collaborates with medical institutions and researchers to conduct specialized studies on emerging conditions, such as cognitive decline, cardiovascular diseases, and reproductive health concerns linked to 9/11 exposure.

Your survey responses help us respond to enrollee health needs and concerns. Enrollees are encouraged and helped to apply to the WTC Health Program with assistance from our Treatment Referral Program staff via **trp@health.nyc.gov**.

Mail's Here

We welcome your letters and input! Please reach out to us at **wtchreletter@health.nyc.gov**.

Hello WTC Health Registry,

I read your last newsletter (Fall 2024) and was pleasantly surprised to see there was an article about quitting smoking. Although many of us (9/11 survivors) have developed respiratory issues from the toxic dust cloud, we continue to indulge in tobacco. The piece in the last newsletter had website links and phone numbers on where and how to get help quitting. If you have not quit yet, please look at that newsletter for some help.

Regards, Just Quit Smoking

Potential Links Between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Obesity



Image credit: hvostik / Shutterstock.com

A recent Registry study investigated a potential association between obesity and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among enrollees. The main objective was to assess how PTSD affected body mass index (BMI) and weight change over time.

We found that younger people (ages 25 to 44) with a history of PTSD after 9/11 are more likely to experience obesity than people ages 45 to 60 or older. The study underscores the need to prioritize both physical and mental health to enhance overall well-being.

To learn more about potential links between PTSD and obesity and other 9/11-related health conditions, visit **nyc.gov/911health** and search for **health materials**.

Takemoto E, Van Oss KR, Chamany S, Brite J, Brackbill R. Post-traumatic stress disorder and the association with overweight, obesity, and weight change among individuals exposed to the World Trade Center disaster, 2003-2016. *Psychol Med.* 2021;51(15):2647-2656. **doi:10.1017/s0033291720001208**

Stay Connected











Take Our Surveys

Many Registry enrollees have responded to our surveys. This information helps us conduct research on 9/11-related health conditions and respond to enrollee health needs. Registry research findings also help inform health care policies, including federal support for the WTC Health Program.

Read Our Health Materials

These informative handouts are our most popular way of getting important health information to our enrollees. To view materials and fact sheets about 9/11-related health conditions, including asthma, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), hearing loss, and sleep apnea, visit **nyc.gov/911health** and search for **health materials**.

Update Your Contact Information

Go paperless and receive Registry communications via email. To update your contact information, call 866-692-9827, email wtchr@health.nyc.gov, or visit nyc.gov/911health.

E-newsletter

Read the Registry's e-newsletter for our latest research findings, 9/11-related news, and interviews with fellow enrollees. For details, email **wtchreletter@health.nyc.gov**.

Use Our Health Data Tools

Data from the Registry's 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2020 major surveys, along with other specialized surveys, are available for use. The data is de-identified to maintain confidentiality. Visit **nyc.gov/911health**, select the **Research** tab, and select **Health Data Tools**.

Mission Statement

With ongoing support from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the Registry continues its mission to:

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

To find this e-newsletter in English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, and Traditional Chinese, visit **nyc.gov/911health** and select the **Research** tab, then choose **Publications** and select the **e-Newsletter** drop-down to find PDFs. To contact the Registry, email **wtchr@health.nyc.gov**.

