

World Trade Center Health Registry 2009 Report and Findings



About the Registry

Who We Are

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

Our Mission

The Registry was established to:

- Identify and track the long-term physical and mental health effects of 9/11
- Share findings and recommendations with enrollees, others affected and the public
- Offer guidance to public health professionals in case of future emergencies

Core Activities

We carry out our mission by:

- **Collecting data.** We gather health information by surveying enrollees, reviewing other health records and data and collaborating with external researchers.
- **Sharing findings.** We analyze data and share findings through presentations, reports, scientific journals and other print and online communications.
- **Maintaining a directory of enrollees.** We maintain and update enrollee contact information to survey enrollees and to keep them informed of the latest 9/11 health news and studies.
- **Conducting outreach and referrals.** We use phone calls, mailings, online communications, presentations and visits to share information about 9/11 resources and health surveys and to refer enrollees to WTC treatment programs and services.

Contents

Letter from the Director	2
2009 Highlights	3
New Findings	3
9/11 Treatment Referral Program	3
Pediatric Guidelines	4
Expanded Online Data	4
Resources	5
9/11 Health Website	5
WTC Centers of Excellence	5
WTC Health Bulletin	5



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Letter from the Director

Dear Enrollees and Partners:

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Registry. Each completed survey provides important insights into the health effects of the WTC disaster.

This report includes information about the Registry's key activities and accomplishments in 2009, as well as details on recent findings about the health consequences of 9/11. It also includes resource information for those affected by the disaster.

With your support, we have:

- Released new 9/11 health findings
- Launched a treatment referral program to help enrollees and others get care for 9/11-related health problems
- Released physician guidelines for evaluating and treating health conditions in children and young adults exposed to the WTC disaster
- Enhanced our 9/11 health web-based data tool so users can search and download expanded Health Registry statistics by multiple indicators

We hope you find this report informative and helpful.

Questions? Need more information? Contact us at 866-NYC-WTCR (866-692-9827) or wthcr@health.nyc.gov, or visit nyc.gov/9-11HealthInfo.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,



Mark Farfel, ScD
Director



2009 Highlights

New Findings

In 2009, we released new findings based on Registry data collected in 2006 and 2007. More than 46,000 adult enrollees participated in the 2006/2007 survey, including lower Manhattan residents, people working in the area on 9/11, passersby and first responders.

Adults directly exposed to the WTC disaster still had elevated risk of post-traumatic stress symptoms and new asthma five to six years later.

The findings¹ - published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* - provide the most comprehensive look at the current health of people directly exposed to the WTC attacks. They show that five to six years after 9/11:

- Post-traumatic stress symptoms and new asthma were major health effects of the WTC attacks.
- People caught in the dust cloud on 9/11 and those who found a heavy layer of dust when they returned to their homes or offices were more likely to develop new asthma and post-traumatic stress symptoms. Rescue and recovery workers who worked on the debris pile on 9/11 or at the WTC site for more than 90 days were also at increased risk.
- 19% of adult enrollees reported new post-traumatic stress symptoms, about four times the rate typically seen among U.S. adults.
- More than half (52%) who reported post-traumatic stress symptoms said they hadn't received treatment in the previous year.
- The rate of post-traumatic stress symptoms was highest among low-income (32%) and Hispanic (31%) enrollees and people passing by on 9/11 (23%).
- 10% of adult enrollees reported they developed new asthma, with most diagnosed in the first 16 months after 9/11.
- The rate of new asthma was highest (12%) among rescue and recovery workers who worked on the debris pile on 9/11.

9/11 Treatment Referral Program

The 9/11 Treatment Referral Program was created to help enrollees and others get care for 9/11-related health problems at no out-of-pocket cost. Referral options include the WTC Environmental Health Center or other WTC Centers of Excellence.

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

¹ Brackbill RM, Hadler JL, DiGrande L, et al (2009). Asthma and Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms 5 to 6 Years Following Exposure to the World Trade Center Terrorist Attack. *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*. Vol. 302(5), pp 502-516.



Pediatric Guidelines

In 2009, the Health Department released new clinical guidelines² for health care providers on how to treat children and young adults exposed to the WTC disaster.

The guidelines review the exposures and health effects of 9/11 in children and young adults and assist health care providers in evaluating and treating these patients. It also includes information about the pediatric program at Bellevue Hospital's WTC Environmental Health Center. The pediatric program is dedicated to the assessment and treatment of 9/11-related conditions in children and young adults at no out-of-pocket cost.

The WTC pediatric and adult clinical guidelines are available at nyc.gov/9-11HealthInfo.

Expanded Online Data

Expanded WTC Health Registry 2003/2004 survey data are now online.

The interactive data tool allows users to search Health Registry statistics by multiple indicators, such as enrollee demographics, eligibility category, type of 9/11 exposure and health conditions. Users can also search by rescue and recovery organization or city agency, such as FDNY, NYPD or DSNY, or download a survey dataset. Data are grouped together to protect enrollees' confidentiality.

To access the data tool, visit nyc.gov/9-11HealthInfo, click on "WTC Health Registry" and then click on "Interactive Data Tool" in the drop down menu.

WTC Health Registry 2006/2007 survey data will be online in 2010.

On the Horizon

We will be introducing a new personalized online service exclusively for enrollees. The online service will provide enrollees an accessible, easy way to:

- Get customized 9/11 health news
- Get information about free treatment for 9/11-related health problems
- Complete Registry health surveys
- Update contact information
- And much more, anytime, day or night

More information will be coming soon.

² Cone J, Perlman S, Eros-Sarnyai et al (2009). Clinical Guidelines for Children and Adolescents Exposed to the World Trade Center Disaster. *City Health Information*. Vol. 28(4), pp 29-40.



Resources

9/11 Health Website

Visit nyc.gov/9-11HealthInfo: It's New York City's full-service resource for the latest 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

WTC Centers of Excellence

The WTC Centers of Excellence offer:

- Free treatment and medication for 9/11-related health conditions
- Treatment by health professionals specializing in 9/11-related conditions
- Assistance with applying for 9/11-related benefits, such as Workers' Compensation

The Centers of Excellence include:

- The WTC Environmental Health Center at Bellevue Hospital Center, Gouverneur Healthcare Services and Elmhurst Hospital Center
- Mount Sinai Consortium: WTC Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program
- Fire Department of New York (FDNY): WTC Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program

To find out if you're eligible or to get more information, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/9-11HealthInfo.

The WTC National Responder Health Program offers free monitoring and treatment services to 9/11 responders who live outside the New York City area. For more information, call 877-498-2911.

WTC Health Bulletin

In 2009, the Health Department published, "Is 9/11 Affecting Your Health?" The bulletin offers city residents advice on how to get information, treatment and help for 9/11-related health problems. For copies, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health.

New Health Survey

We will be surveying enrollees to learn more about their health status nine to 10 years after the disaster. The answers will help us better understand the long-term health effects of 9/11, as well as identify and help address gaps in medical and mental health treatment and services. We encourage enrollees to complete their surveys when they receive them.

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**Remember to include your email. It's the fastest, most environmentally
friendly way to send you the latest 9/11 health news.**



nyc.gov/health

