

# NEW YORK POST

## 9/11 CANCER COPS

By SUSAN EDELMAN

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May 31, 2007 -- A group of 9/11 responders has contracted blood cancers at an unusually young age, and top doctors suspect the disease was triggered by an unprecedented "synergistic mix" of toxins at the World Trade Center site.

The WTC Medical Monitoring Program is now studying a group of Ground Zero workers, including cops, construction workers and volunteers, suffering from cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma and multiple myeloma.

"The kind of thing that worries us is that we have a handful of cases of multiple myeloma in very young individuals . . . a condition that almost always presents late in life," said Dr. Robin Herbert, co-director of the program at Mount Sinai Hospital.

"That's the kind of odd, unusual and troubling finding that we're seeing already," she says in an interview with the New England Journal of Medicine, which comes out today.

The WTC monitoring program has examined more than 20,000 workers, but so far has focused on respiratory ailments.

The mounting cancers, Herbert said, represent a "third wave" of sickness stemming from Ground Zero exposure. First came immediate breathing problems, then chronic lung diseases.

"We're worried about a third wave, which is the possibility of cancer down the road," she said.

The Post has published several reports on the growing number of 9/11 responders with cancer.

Doctors say a comparison of cancer rates in 9/11 workers with normal rates in the same age groups could prove whether WTC dust and smoke caused an increase.

Attorney David Worby, who filed a class-action suit for 9/11 workers in 2004, said yesterday about 105 of his 10,000 clients have gotten blood cancers, one as young as 30. Most range in age from 35 to 45, he said.

Several have died, including a carpenter and two NYPD cops.

Worby has long argued that a "synergistic effect" - exposure to multiple toxins - weakened the immune system and accelerated the cancer process.

He also explains the early onset of cancer in firefighters, cops and construction workers as a result of "years of prior toxic exposure" in their jobs.

"The argument that these diseases don't happen so fast does not take into account those pre-dispositions," he said. "They've been using the wrong math to calculate the latency periods."

For the first time publicly, Herbert said WTC doctors are "worried about the possibility of synergistic effect."

She said 9/11 workers were exposed to a mix of cancer-causing agents plus an "unbelievable range of other chemicals."

"One of the things that surprised me, and many of my colleagues, is how often we're seeing the so-called zebras, the conditions that we never actually saw in our lives before," Herbert said.

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