



Study: WTC-Exposed Firefighters Do Not Recover Lung Function

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Parker Waichman LLP, a national law firm that has spent many years fighting to ensure that the first responders and survivors of the 9/11 terrorist attacks are never forgotten, is commenting on the findings of a recent study involving the health effects of World Trade Center (WTC) exposure. On January 13, 2016, CHEST published a study looking at the role of smoking and smoking cessation on lung function in WTC-exposed firefighters. The researchers, who evaluated 13 years of lung function trajectories, found that, while lung function improved with cessation of smoking, those with a WTC-linked respiratory injury did not experience recovery. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26836912>

According to the research authors' background information, Fire Department of New York (FDNY) firefighters lost an average of 10 percent of lung function following the 9/11 attacks; new obstructive airway diseases developed in over 10 percent of firefighters. In the first 6 years following the attacks, there was generally little recovery. The study aimed to examine longer-term exposure effects and the impact of smoking and smoking cessation. The study looked at lung function among 10,641 WTC-exposed FDNY firefighters. On average, firefighters who arrived on the morning of the attacks tested with lower lung function compared to those who were less exposed. Those who never smoked tested with better lung function than individuals who are

current smokers. The lung function of former smokers fell somewhere in-between, based on when they stopped smoking. The authors concluded that, 13-years after 9/11/2001, most firefighters continued to show a lack of lung function recovery, with the trajectory of decline differing by WTC-exposure and smoking-status. Unlike the immutable effect of WTC exposure, we demonstrated the benefit on lung function of smoking cessation in this unique occupational/environmental cohort.

Parker Waichman comments that exposure to the toxic conditions during and after 9/11 is associated with many health conditions, including respiratory illnesses and many different types of cancer. "This study suggests that the effects of WTC exposure on lung function may be irreversible," said Matthew J. McCauley, Senior Litigation Counsel at Parker Waichman. "These findings, along with many others, further confirm that Congress made the right decision by reauthorizing the Zadroga Act."

The Zadroga Act provides medical benefits and compensation to sick and injured 9/11 responders through the WTC Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF). The act was first passed in 2010. After years of effort, the act was recently reauthorized. The reauthorization, which was signed into law on December 18, 2015, funds the WTC Health Program for another 75 years and extends the VCF for another five years.

Parker Waichman actively worked toward the 2010 passage of the Zadroga Act, as well its recent reauthorization in 2015. In doing so, the firm committed its resources to many projects, including taking part in numerous lobbying efforts and rallies, and being part of delegations in trips to the nation's capital, often along with the firm's clients' other responders and survivors. In addition, Parker Waichman also committed its resources to assist with the research on, and creation of, the "Take Action" toll that enabled citizens to review Congress members' activities concerning the Act.

The firm continues to stand alongside Ground Zero first responders, survivors, and advocates and vows to continue its efforts to safeguard these heroes and ensure that all of the deserved Zadroga Act compensation is received. To determine eligibility for compensation under the Act, or for assistance with a claim, please visit Parker Waichman's website or call 1-800-LAW-INFO (1-800-529-4636).

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