

Headache may linger years later in people exposed to World Trade Center dust, fumes

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Workers and residents exposed to dust and fumes caused by the collapse of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 frequently reported headache years later, according to research released today that will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 62nd Annual Meeting in Toronto April 10 to April 17, 2010.

"We knew that headaches were common in people living and working near the World Trade Center on and immediately after 9/11, but this is the first study to look at headaches several years after the event," said study author Sara Crystal, MD, with the NYU School of Medicine in New York City.

The study involved 765 people who were enrolled in the Bellevue Hospital World Trade Center Environmental Health Center seven years after the building collapse and who did not have headaches prior to 9/11. Of those, about 55 percent reported having exposure to the initial World Trade Center dust cloud.

Headaches in the four weeks prior to enrollment were reported by 43 percent of those surveyed, suggesting that headache is a common and persistent symptom in those exposed to World Trade Center dust and fumes. People caught in the initial dust cloud were slightly more likely to report headaches than those not caught in the [dust cloud](#), which may indicate that greater exposure may be associated with a greater risk of developing persistent [headache](#). People with headaches were also more likely to experience wheezing, breathlessness with exercise, nasal drip or

sinus congestion and reflux disease after 9/11.

"More research needs to be done on the possible longer-term effects of exposure to gasses and dust when the World Trade Center fell," Crystal said. "We also need additional studies to understand the relationship between headaches, other physical symptoms, and [mental health issues](#)."

More data will be presented by Crystal at the 62nd AAN Annual Meeting.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

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