

Industrial cleaner linked to increased risk of Parkinson's disease

February 8 2010

Workers exposed to trichloroethylene (TCE), a chemical once widely used to clean metal such as auto parts, may be at a significantly higher risk of developing Parkinson's disease, according to a study released today that will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 62nd Annual Meeting in Toronto April 10 to April 17, 2010.

"This is the first time a population-based study has confirmed case reports that exposure to TCE may increase a person's risk of developing Parkinson's disease," said study author Samuel Goldman, MD, with the Parkinson's Institute in Sunnyvale, California, and a member of the American Academy of Neurology. "TCE was once a popular industrial solvent used in dry cleaning and to clean grease off metal parts, but due to other health concerns the [chemical](#) is no longer widely used."

For the study, researchers obtained job histories from 99 pairs of [twins](#) in which only one of the twins had Parkinson's disease. All of the twins were men and identified from the World War II-Veterans Twins [Cohort study](#). Scientists used twins in the study because they are genetically identical or very similar and provide an ideal population for evaluating [environmental risk factors](#).

The study found workers who were exposed to TCE were five and a half times more likely to have Parkinson's disease than people not exposed to the chemical. Those who were exposed to TCE had job histories including work as dry cleaners, machinists, mechanics or electricians.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

Citation: Industrial cleaner linked to increased risk of Parkinson's disease (2010, February 8)
retrieved 18 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-02-industrial-cleaner-linked-parkinson-disease.html>

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