

# Canadian researchers launch world's first online environmental health Atlas

September 17 2013, by Sunanda Creagh

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Canadian researchers, led by a Simon Fraser University professor, have launched the world's first interactive website to raise awareness about the myriad of ways environmental influences affect our health.

The [Canadian Environmental Health Atlas](#) is an online resource that emphasizes environmental [health](#) research and case studies. It uses maps, graphics, videos, and infographics for viewers to interact with and understand how the environment impacts public health.

The website also offers viewers articles and publications, downloadable images, and recent health topics in the news to supplement scientific data.

"Our health is intrinsically linked with the environment," says SFU health sciences professor Bruce Lanphear, lead scientist for the project. "Where we live, work, and play influences our health and risk of developing a disease or disorder."

In addition to highlighting the importance of environmental health in health promotion and disease prevention, the atlas intends to build a common vocabulary for public dialogue in public health.

"We have to expand our focus on the environment if you want to prevent disease," says Lanphear. "This contrasts with the dominant view that investing in drugs, genetics and biomedical technology will solve our health problems."

"With few exceptions, like vaccines, dramatic improvements in health resulted from water treatment, housing quality, [food quality](#) and environmental regulations, like banning smoking in public places and phasing out [leaded gasoline](#)."

He hopes the website will help viewers understand that the environment is key to improving public health.

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