

World Trade Center workers at increased risk of developing autoimmune diseases

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A new study has found a strong link between prolonged work at the World Trade Center (WTC) site following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the development of various autoimmune diseases including arthritis and lupus.

The risk of developing an autoimmune disease over the next decade increased by about 13% for each month worked at the site. Investigators estimate that individuals worked 10 months at the site were more than 3-times as likely to develop an autoimmune disease than those who worked there for 1 month.

"We believe that this is the first study to demonstrate that prolonged WTC-exposure is an important predictor of post-9/11 systemic autoimmune diseases," said Dr. Mayris Webber, lead author of the *Arthritis & Rheumatology* study. "It is our hope that increased awareness of this association can lead to earlier diagnosis and treatment."

More information: *Arthritis & Rheumatology*, [DOI: 10.1002/art.39059](https://doi.org/10.1002/art.39059)

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