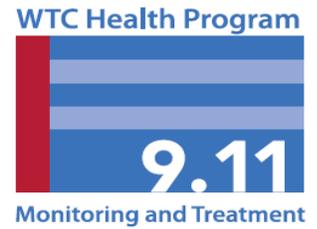




FDNY WTC Health Program



Issue 11

August 2012

Your Participation is as Important as Ever

Message from Dr. Prezant

Dr. Prezant is the Chief Medical Officer for the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) and the Special Advisor to the Fire Commissioner for Health Policy. He is FDNY's senior Pulmonary Consultant, Co-Director of FDNY's World Trade Center Medical Programs and the Principal Investigator for the NIOSH funded FDNY World Trade Center Data Center.



September 11, 2012, our eleventh anniversary, is fast approaching. On 9/11 and in the years that followed, each of us lost co-workers, friends, family and loved ones who if not for that tragic day would still be here today. I think about them often and I know that they would be proud of us because we have all worked together to build FDNY's WTC Health Program. Together, we designed a premier healthcare program for the monitoring and treatment of WTC-related physical and mental health diseases. But we cannot stand still and in the next few months, this program will expand to include cancer screening and treatment.

Your FDNY WTC Health Program was the first to provide treatment for WTC-related injuries and illnesses, the first to describe the health consequences, the first to detail the longitudinal decline in lung function after 9/11 and the first to demonstrate that cancer risk was increased after 9/11. The Commissioner, management, labor and most importantly our patients have supported this work from its very beginning. We traveled together from Ground Zero, to the NYS Legislature, to Congress and to the President to make the point again and again that your WTC Health Program is critically important and must be funded. But without the support of our patients and the scientific evidence provided by this program, advocacy alone would not have succeeded. Last year, we received funding through June 2016 and soon the work will begin to extend this funding further.

Many of us have found a "new normal" because of the healthcare provided by our program. And now with soon to be added cancer screening and cancer treatment, many more will be helped and additional lives saved. Thank you for your support; stay safe and stay healthy.

Anniversary Reactions

As 9/11 approaches, have you noticed that you have become more irritable or are quick to anger? Do you feel more stressed, fatigued, or sad? Are you drinking more? You may be experiencing a reaction to the anniversary of the WTC attacks.

On or around the anniversary of a traumatic event, many people experience an increase in distressing memories as well as emotional, physical, or behavioral reactions. Anniversary reactions are also common around holidays, birthdays, or other significant dates related to the deceased.

Anniversary reactions may be experienced even years after the event. In the case of 9/11, increased media coverage or even planned memorials may contribute to these reactions.

Anniversary reactions are normal and will most likely subside within a week or two of the anniversary.

If the feelings do not decrease and are affecting your daily life call FDNY-CSU for a mental health consultation or referral in your area: 212-570-1693

What You Can Do to Cope:

1. Recognize that these reactions are common and expected.
2. Reduce or eliminate your exposure to images and reminders of the event, if this brings up painful feelings.
3. Plan ahead for how and with whom you will spend your time on and around the anniversary.
4. Create a ritual that is meaningful to you. For example, volunteer, donate to a charity, or spend time with family.
5. Talk to someone: family, friends, co-workers, or a mental health professional.
6. Take care of yourself: get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet, drink plenty of water, exercise, and avoid excessive alcohol consumption.
7. Find Balance. There will be a lot of memorials to attend and friends to remember this September. Even if you feel duty-bound to attend these services, make sure to make time for enjoyable activities with family and friends as well.

WTC Staff Profile: Frank Groce

You'll know you have met Frank when you arrive at MetroTech for your medical monitoring exam, and are met by a warm smile combined with a generous helping of southern hospitality.

Frank, the front desk supervisor, comes to FDNY by way of Alabama. He brings with him work experience as the Program Director of Star Lake Camp, House Manager of the New York City Veteran's Homeless Shelter as well as District manager at Blockbuster Video.

It's Frank's mission to make sure that every member's experience getting a WTC medical monitoring exam at BHS goes smoothly, and his motto is "let's get it done".

Frank jumps in to help with everything from making sure the air conditioning is set to come on for Sunday medicals, to addressing computer problems that are interfering with a member completing the health interview. He also welcomes family members who may have come along curious about the WTC Health Program and are interested in supporting their family member's health and well being.



"Frank puts people at ease and is the guiding force behind a successful medical monitoring exam." FDNY Peer Counselor, Bob Winckler

Did You Know? Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

1. PTSD can emerge years after a traumatic event. T__F__
2. If PTSD is left untreated, it will go away on its own. T__F__
3. Medications for PTSD can be taken while on full duty. T__F__

"I learned about my symptoms and got treatment, and it's made a real difference"
 FDNY member

Some people with PTSD will experience symptoms soon after a traumatic event such as 9/11, while for others it may be years later.

It is not uncommon for a loss many years after a traumatic event to trigger or exacerbate symptoms.

The additional time retirement provides for reflection can also increase PTSD symptoms.

Answers:

1. True 2. False 3. True

One of the symptoms of PTSD is avoidance of reminders of the traumatic event, including speaking about it.

Counselors are sensitive to this issue and will work with you at your own pace.

If you are experiencing anger, isolation, sleep disturbances, or an increase in alcohol intake, get in touch with FDNY-CSU for a consultation at (212) 570-1693.

PFT FAQs: Pulmonary Function Test

1. I know that the PFT is supposed to detect lung problems, but what exactly does the PFT measure?

Forced Vital Capacity, which is the amount of air that can be forcibly exhaled after an inhalation. Forced expiratory volume in the 1st second is the speed at which air can be exhaled. These measures are used because they can indicate the presence of an obstructive airway disease (asthma, COPD, chronic bronchitis or emphysema etc.) or a restrictive disease (fibrosis, sarcoidosis, asbestosis, pneumonia, etc.).

It is also possible for the PFT test to pick up the presence of a blockage in the lungs. After the forceful exhalation is taken, the next inhalation maybe be impeded by the presence of a blockage.

2. How do you know what PFT scores or values are normal?

The amount of forced vital capacity that is considered normal is determined by a combination of factors including age, gender, body size, and ethnicity.

As an FDNY member, when you come in for your PFT test the values that are collected are compared with previous years' values. It is a comparison of lung function over time. This is why it is important not to compare your score with other people you know. What might be considered normal for you may be very different for someone else.



FDNY WTC Health Program staff are experts in WTC-related conditions and how to treat them.

For more information, or to make an appointment, call 718-999-1858.

3. Why is it necessary to repeat the forceful exhale so many times? Are you repeating it to try and achieve a particular score?

The test is repeated to establish consistency. If the test is given just once then it might not be accurate. If it is repeated three or four times with a similar result then it is more likely to be an accurate measure.

4. Why is the test done seated first and then standing?

Sitting is a safety precaution because dizziness is common initially. Once you are acclimated to the test you stand which relieves pressure on the diaphragm and enables you to breathe more easily.

5. Is the PFT test safe?

The PFT test is safe for most individuals as side effects from the test are extremely rare. Certain medical conditions are contraindicated, including: recent eye, abdominal or thoracic surgery, a heart attack or stroke within the last three months, or the presence of an arterial aneurysm or hemoptysis (coughing up blood).

If you have any concerns about a health condition you have that may make the PFT test unsafe for you, just ask a WTC Health Program staff member and they can advise you.

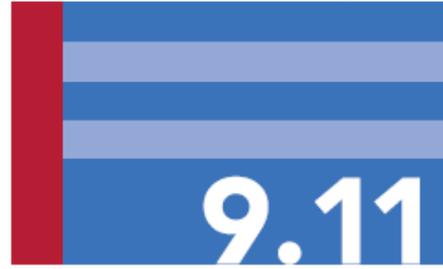
FDNY WTC HEALTH PROGRAM

9 MetroTech Center, Room 2E-13
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Phone: 718-999-1858

E-mail: wtcmed@fdny.nyc.gov

WTC Health Program



Monitoring and Treatment



FDNY WTC HEALTH PROGRAM

When was the last time you came for your WTC Medical?

Call **718-999-1858** to make your appointment.

For questions about prescriptions, please contact **718-999-1937** or **718-999-0305**.

WTC Medicals are available annually to active members in Brooklyn (MetroTech) and retired members at all 5 locations.

Not all testing is done On-Site at every location.

Retirees, please use table below to find your location and testing information:

	Brooklyn	Fort Totten	Middletown	Staten Island	Brentwood
Blood Tests	On-Site	On-Site	On-Site	Off-Site	Off-Site
X-Rays	On-Site	Off-Site	Off-Site	Off-Site	Off-Site

Referrals to nearby facilities for off-site tests will be given to you by a WTC nurse on the day of your appointment.