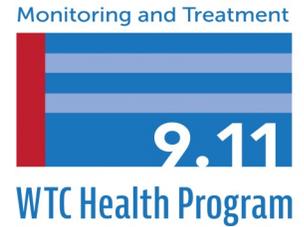




# FDNY WTC Health Program



ISSUE XII

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## Message from Fire Commissioner Nigro on the 14th Anniversary of 9/11

This September marks the 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day that changed our Department forever. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the world witnessed FDNY members racing into the World Trade Center to rescue others from a cowardly act of terror. That noble act of risking one's life to save the life of another is the work that has defined the FDNY for 150 years; but that day stands out above all others. No Department has ever paid such a steep price for performing its core life-saving mission, and we continue to lose friends and loved ones to illnesses related to that terrible day.



Today, more than 15,000 FDNY members are enrolled in the World Trade Center Health Program. Far too many continue to courageously battle cancer, respiratory issues and other diseases that are a direct result of their brave and selfless work. Our members, and their families, will deal with the physical and mental effects of September 11<sup>th</sup> for as long as they live.

The job demands a lifetime commitment of service and integrity both on and off-duty. That commitment means that the Department will always be there to support our members. FDNY Doctors were the first to provide monitoring and treatment following September 11<sup>th</sup>, and their dedication to this cause has only grown every year since. Last year alone, more than 7,500 FDNY members were treated for World Trade Center related injuries and illness. Diagnosis and treatment for these injuries and illnesses is complicated, but it has been instrumental for early detection and has helped provide greater quality of life for so many FDNY members.

The Department continues to seek commitments of funding – including through the reauthorization of the Zadroga Act – for the World Trade Center Health Program because it is vital to the health and well-being of all FDNY members and their families. We will never forget the sacrifices of so many and we will continue to work diligently to care for each of you.

## Did You Know: WTC Prescriptions

### What is required to receive prescriptions for WTC covered medications?

The Zadroga Law (more information on page 3) requires a *separate certification for each WTC-related health illness category* (ex. upper airway covers nose, sinus and throat). Certification requests are submitted by FDNY WTC Health Program doctors to NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) for approval. Once your condition is certified as WTC-related, any medications covered by the WTC Health Program to treat that category of illnesses may be prescribed for you.

WTC prescriptions must be written by a FDNY WTC Treatment physician.

Members should be up to date with their monitoring exams for FDNY WTC doctors to write long-term prescriptions. This is why we make every effort to provide a yearly medical monitoring exam to all of our members - especially those on chronic medications who need an FDNY WTC doctor to write a 90 day (three refills) prescription for a WTC-covered maintenance medication at a WTC treatment appointment. If you have not had a WTC Medical within the last year, we will schedule one for you and our WTC doctor may write only 30 day prescriptions until that monitoring exam is obtained. Of course, if you are too ill to come for a monitoring exam, our doctors and case management nurses will make other arrangements so that your medications and treatments can continue uninterrupted.

### Is this card in your wallet?

WTC Health Program I.D. Card. Present card at any local U.S. pharmacy with prescriptions written by FDNY WTC doctors for WTC covered controlled substance medications, antibiotics, or fill-in maintenance medications.



#### Prescription Benefit Information

Present this card to the pharmacist only if you have been approved by a WTC Health Program provider to receive prescriptions for a certified WTC-related condition. Any attempt to fill a prescription for a medication not approved by the WTC Health Program will be rejected.

RxBin: 600426    RxGroup: WTC1020    RxPCN: WTC

#### Questions?

FDNY Clinical Center: 718-999-1858  
WTC Health Program: 1-888-982-4748

Learn more. [www.cdc.gov/wtc](http://www.cdc.gov/wtc)

### Are you aware of the WTCHP “generics first” policy for bronchodilators and nasal corticosteroid medications?

Beginning in October both the bronchodilator rescue inhaler and nasal spray steroids will be provided to members in generic form. More specifically, any member currently prescribed **Proventil HFA Inhaler** or **ProAir HFA Inhaler**, will be switched to **Ventolin HFA Inhaler** and any member prescribed **Nasonex**, **Veramyst**, **Omnaris**, **Rhinocort**, **Zetonna**, or **Beconase AQ** will be switched to **Nasacort OTC**. Additionally, generic **fluticasone** will be dispensed in place of the brand **Flonase**.

This policy change, which will go into effect at all WTC Health Program Centers, takes into account cost savings as well as equal effectiveness. For the bronchodilator rescue sprays it was determined, after conferring with numerous Pulmonary specialists, that all three meds (Proventil, ProAir, and Ventolin) are considered **equally effective**. For the nasal steroids spray it was determined, after conferring with numerous Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialists, that the changes will have **no impact on the effectiveness** of symptom relief for our members. While we do not expect any issues to arise, if you notice any significant change in your condition or have any problems with the new medication we ask that you contact us at 718-999-1878.

This change, while not impacting your care, will produce substantial cost-savings that can be applied to other clinical needs within the WTCHP, such as cancer treatments. **We thank you for your cooperation.**

## Advocacy Effort to Reauthorize Zadroga Bill

**The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act** was introduced to both Houses of Congress in April of 2015. The original bill, signed into law early in late 2010, established the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP). In addition to funding the monitoring and treatment of those affected by WTC-related health conditions, it provides people affected by 9/11 the opportunity to file for economic compensation through the Victim Compensation Fund (VCF). Without reauthorization, these important programs are in danger of ending soon.

The WTCHP provides invaluable assistance to a variety of people impacted by 9/11. Current services include a Responder Program (including more than 15,000 FDNY members), a Survivor Program (for those who lived, worked, or went to school in lower Manhattan on 9/11), as well as programs for responders of the Pentagon and Shanksville, PA sites. No matter where they live in the US, those affected have access to WTC health services. This is especially important for FDNY members who retire outside of the NYC area.

Additionally, the legislation provides funding for the FDNY-Montefiore Medical Center-Albert Einstein College of Medicine research team of epidemiologists and biostatisticians. The work of this FDNY WTC team has been instrumental in detailing the health impact of FDNY members' unique exposures at the WTC site. Among many important accomplishments, the FDNY team provided the medical and scientific evidence that NIOSH needed to add cancer as a covered WTC health category.

Updated information about the Zadroga Act, the WTCHP, and ongoing reauthorization efforts is available online through the group "9/11 Health Watch." You can find out more at the addresses below.

<http://www.911healthwatch.org/>

<http://www.911healthwatch.org/reauthorization-take-action/>

## WTC Mental Health: PTSD

PTSD is one of the top mental health conditions that we treat in the WTCHP. Most people have heard of PTSD, but may not recognize it in themselves. Common symptoms of PTSD fit into three different categories:

**Re-experiencing Symptoms:** flashbacks—reliving the trauma experienced on 9/11 and after, elevated heartrate, sweating, bad dreams, or frightening thoughts.

**Avoidance Symptoms:** staying away from places, events, people, objects that are reminders of 9/11; feeling emotionally numb; feelings of guilt, Depression, or worry; losing interest in things that used to be pleasurable; or having trouble remembering the event.

**Hyperarousal symptoms:** being easily startled, feeling tense or on edge, having difficulty sleeping, or having angry outbursts.

FDNY WTC Program staff are experts on WTC related conditions and how to treat them.

For more information about confidential treatment call FDNY-CSU at (212) 570-1693

If you live out of the NYC area we can refer you to a provider in your community.

Symptoms of PTSD typically begin within three months of a traumatic event, but not always. Sometimes it is a life stressor like the loss of a loved one, emergence of a serious health issue, or major life transition such as retirement that can stimulate symptom onset. Symptoms of PTSD can make it very difficult to go about daily life. They can get in the way of going to work, being close with friends or family, and getting necessary tasks complete. PTSD is often accompanied by depression, substance abuse, or one or more anxiety disorders.

Everyone responds uniquely to treatment so there are a variety of modalities available including medication and various forms of psychotherapy that are offered through the FDNY-CSU including Exposure therapy, Cognitive Behavior therapy, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). **If any of this resonates with you please call FDNY-CSU to make an appointment for a consultation.**

**FDNY WTC HEALTH PROGRAM**

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

Phone: 718-999-1858  
E-mail: wtcmed@fdny.nyc.gov

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.

**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 the table below to find your location and testing information:

	<b>Brooklyn HQ</b>	<b>Fort Totten</b>	<b>Orange County</b>	<b>Staten Island</b>	<b>Commack</b>
Address	9 MetroTech Center Brooklyn, NY 11201	Building 413A Bayside, NY 11364	2277 Goshen Turnpike Middletown, NY 10941	1688 Victory Blvd Staten Island, NY 10314	66 Commack Road Suite 200 Commack, NY 11725
Days	Tuesday — Friday & Occasional Sundays	Monday — Thursday	Monday , Thursday, Friday	Monday— Thursday	Monday, Wednes- day, Friday Tuesday Treatment Only Occasional Sundays
Hours	8:00AM to 2:00PM	M & W 8:30AM to 3:30PM T & TH 9:00AM to 3:30PM	9:00AM to 1:00PM	8:30AM to 3:30PM	8:00AM to 3:30 PM
Blood Tests	On-Site	On-Site	On-Site	<b>Off-Site</b>	<b>Off-Site</b>
X-Rays	On-Site	<b>Off-Site</b>	<b>Off-Site</b>	<b>Off-Site</b>	<b>Off-Site</b>

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