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ACG: GI Disorders in Military, 9/11 Responders Studied

Active-duty military and World Trade Center responders may have higher disorder rates

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MONDAY, Oct. 26 (HealthDay News) -- Active-duty military personnel and World Trade Center (WTC) workers have an increased risk of gastrointestinal disorders, according to two studies presented this week at the American College of Gastroenterology Annual Scientific Meeting, held from Oct. 23 to 28 in San Diego.

In one study, Mark Riddle, M.D., of the Naval Medical Research Center in Silver Spring, Md., and colleagues analyzed data from the Defense Medical Surveillance System to identify 31,866 cases of functional gastrointestinal disorders and matched each case to four controls. They found a strong association between infectious gastroenteritis and all functional gastrointestinal disorders, observing the highest risk for functional diarrhea and irritable bowel syndrome (odds ratios, 6.28 and 3.72, respectively).

In a second study, Yvette Lam, M.D., of the Stony Brook University Medical Center in New York, and colleagues studied 697 World Trade Center responders. They found that 41 percent of subjects had gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), more than 20 percent higher than in the general population. In addition, participants with GERD had a higher prevalence of mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

"The high frequencies of GERD and mental health disorders, seen in WTC workers just after 9/11, persist four and six years later. GERD patients are 2.13 and 2.65 times more likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, respectively. GERD increases progressively among patients with greater than or equal to two mental health disorders," Lam and colleagues write.

[Abstract - Riddle](#)

[Abstract - Lam](#)

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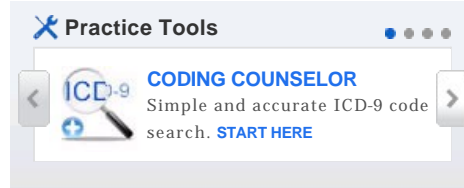
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