



FDNY WTC Health Program

Monitoring and Treatment



ISSUE IX

Spring 2015

Program Updates: New location in Commack and Expanded location in Middletown

The World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) has expanded their sites both in Eastern Long Island and Orange County. On Eastern Long Island there is a new location for the Monitoring and Treatment in Commack. In Orange County, there is a new distinct building located in the same parking lot adjacent to the FDNY-CSU building that will be for the WTCHP monitoring exams and physical health treatment. These changes help the WTCHP serve it's members better with more space and availability for services. Monitoring and treatment appointments are now available multiple days per week at all locations.

Commack, Long Island (Suffolk County) 66 Commack Road, Suite 200
Commack, NY 11725 / 631-858 2190 *New Office in a different location*

Middletown, NY (Orange County) 2277 Goshen Turnpike
Middletown NY 10841 / 845-695 0695 *Same parking lot, new office in a different building*

New Study: WTC Exposure and Autoimmune Diseases

A groundbreaking study conducted by the FDNY and Montefiore Medical Center will be published in May of 2015 showing that prolonged work at the WTC site is a significant predictor of some systemic autoimmune diseases. Autoimmune diseases occur when the body produces antibodies that attack its own tissue. The specific autoimmune diseases that were studied include rheumatoid arthritis, spondyloarthritis, systemic inflammatory myositis (IM) and others. Some of the more damaging effects of these diseases include joint destruction, kidney failure, pulmonary fibrosis and hypertension. Among the 59 members diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, the top three diseases were rheumatoid arthritis (22 cases or 37%), spondyloarthritis (13 cases or 22%), and inflammatory myositis (8 cases or 14%).

The doctors at the FDNY WTCHP began noticing an increase in members reporting treatment for various systemic autoimmune diseases when they were interviewed at their annual exam. Because these diseases occur more often in women, and the FDNY is predominately male, the increase was noticed and considered worth exploring further. In 2005, the data collection team at FDNY added an additional question to the medical monitoring exam to see whether there were other members similarly reporting autoimmune diagnoses.

Based on the preliminary health data gathered, the FDNY and Montefiore were awarded a grant to perform a research study of the problem. Because of the difficulty in diagnosing autoimmune diseases, this included a meticulous tracking of every potential case. Findings based on 59 confirmed cases showed that an exposed worker's chance of getting SAID rose 13% for each month spent at the WTC site. In addition, workers who spent 10 months working at the site had a threefold higher risk than those who worked for one month. Although statistically significant, it's important to keep in mind that there were a total of 59 new cases among about 16,000 individuals studied in the 12 year period included in the study.

Mayris P. Webber, Chief Investigator on the study, emphasized that members who arrived early at the site or worked for an extended period should be seen by a doctor if they are experiencing persistent symptoms that disrupt functioning. With early detection and treatment, patients with systemic autoimmune diseases can experience a better quality of life and reduce or delay organ damage.

WTC Exposures: Health Impact for FDNY Members

Please find below some recent FDNY certification statistics. There are 9,944 members (roughly 60% of our FD WTC responders) who have at least one certified WTC-related health condition as of March 2015. Many of the major certification categories are listed below.

Cancer	1009
Gastrointestinal	5387
Lower Airway	5393
Upper Airway	5177

Staff Profile: Dr. Tremaine Sayles, New Director FDNY-CSU

Dr. Sayles is a native New Yorker who went to Regis High School before attending Duke University to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. During his time at Duke, he entered the military in the field artillery division and since then has served over 22 years as a U.S. army officer and a decorated combat veteran. He finds that working in the military can be likened to working for the fire department in that, "the work that is provided, our society can't do without". In both fields you learn to keep going, even in the face of physical injury or emotional distress. You also learn to seek help when necessary.

Dr. Sayles has held a wide variety of management positions in both social services and the military where he was able to develop and organize systems of response and support. Dr. Sayles worked in substance abuse treatment programs for many years, and feels equipped with the knowledge and experience necessary to benefit our members.



Dr. Sayles has always been interested in mental health, especially the clinical assessment process — understanding the contributing factors underlying an individual's problems to attempt to find solutions. Following his interest, he obtained his Master's in Clinical Social Work at Columbia University and his Doctorate in Psychology from St. John's University. As an administrator, he believes he can positively affect even more lives through policy and planning work.

One of Dr. Sayles' personal goals is to continue to take on new and different challenges. Two years ago he went from barely finishing a lap in the pool to completing an Olympic length Triathlon. This included swimming just under a mile, a 25 mile bike ride, followed by a six mile run—yes, all on the same day!

Dr. Sayles has found the FDNY very welcoming and is enjoying working with his new CSU family. He feels happy to be in a position to be able to help *all* FDNY members, especially those still struggling with issues stemming from 9/11.

WTC Mental Health: Did You Know? Anxiety

According to the National Institute of Health, anxiety disorders affect about 40 million Americans in a given year. Anxiety disorders are not to be confused with brief periods of anxiety that can occur before a big event like a marriage or public speaking. Anxiety disorders *last at least six months and can get worse if they are not treated.* It is common for anxiety disorders to occur along with other mental health issues such as alcohol or substance abuse.

Anxiety disorders exist in various forms including panic disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD), social phobias (or social anxiety disorder), specific phobias and generalized anxiety disorders (GAD). Each anxiety disorder has slightly different symptoms, but they all share a common theme of *excessive, irrational fear and dread* that disrupts functioning.

Mental health research has shown that the best way to treat anxiety is through a combination of medication and psychotherapy. In fact, many studies indicate that medication alone will not cure an anxiety disorder, but it can help to bring symptoms under control and give an individual an opportunity to attend and benefit from psychotherapy. While courses of treatment will vary, good results can occur in a reasonable amount of time. For example, a course of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), a common form of psychotherapy used for anxiety disorders, would likely be shorter than a treatment involving multiple co-occurring issues such as alcohol or depression. Other useful treatment modalities include exposure therapy and experiential therapies like EMDR. In the next issue we will

will take an in depth look at PTSD; an anxiety disorder that is one of the top three mental health issues our members suffer with.

Certain lifestyle measures can be helpful in dealing with anxiety, including a daily practice of stress

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

management techniques (meditation), aerobic exercise and limiting caffeine intake. The thing to remember is that in most cases anxiety disorders *are treatable*, and with the right treatment most people can work and live fully functional lives.

FDNY-CSU Locations

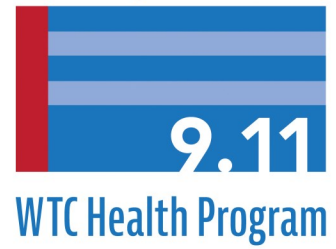
	Lafayette	Staten Island	Ft Totten	Orange County	Brentwood
Address	251 Lafayette St. 3rd fl. New York, NY 10012	1688 Victory Blvd Staten Island, NY 10314	Building 413A Bayside, NY 11364	2279 Goshen Turnpike Middletown, NY 10941	Suffolk County Community Col- lege 1001 Crooked Hill Rd. Brentwood, NY 11717
Call to make an appointment	212-570-1693	718-815-4111	718-352-2140	845-695-1029	631-851-6888

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 table below to find your location and testing information:

	Brooklyn HQ	Fort Totten	Orange County	Staten Island	Commack
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	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.