



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC 24/7: Saving lives, protecting people, reducing health costs

Emergency Preparedness and Response

Health Surveillance

Please note: Following this report, new reports will be released less often. Beginning with the next report, new reports will provide two weeks of data.

UPDATE: This information is current as of October 15, 2010, 4:00 PM ET

The Gulf Coast Oil Spill has the potential to affect human health in addition to the effects already seen on animal and marine life. CDC, along with the affected Gulf Coast states, has developed a plan to track the potential short-term health effects related to the oil spill in the affected communities. Surveillance systems track changes in the number and severity of illnesses and injuries in a population, alerting public health officials to trends that require further investigation.

CDC, with state and local health departments, is conducting surveillance across the four Gulf States for health effects possibly related to the oil spill using national and state-based surveillance systems. These surveillance systems are being used to track symptoms related to the eyes, skin, and respiratory, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and neurological systems, including worsening of asthma, cough, chest pain, eye irritation, nausea, and headache. If the surveillance systems identify groups of people with these symptoms, state and local public health officials will be able to follow up as needed to investigate whether there is an association between the symptoms and the oil spill. This follow-up is important because the same symptoms could be related to a cause unrelated to the oil spill.

These surveillance systems are designed to look for health trends in different ways but all are designed to provide health authorities with signs of possible health impacts on the people and groups most likely to come into contact with the oil. For instance, one system tracks calls to Poison Control Centers related to the oil spill while another system looks at diagnoses at coastal hospitals. These different approaches to tracking health information may mean that some surveillance systems identify trends that other systems do not. By using multiple systems, CDC and the state and local health departments obtain a more comprehensive picture of the health of people who live and work on the Gulf Coast.

CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is also tracking illnesses and injuries reported by Deepwater Horizon response workers in the [NIOSH Report of BP Illness and Injury Data](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/oilspillresponse/data.html) (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/oilspillresponse/data.html>).

National Poison Data System (NPDS)

CDC has an agreement with the American Association of Poison Control Center's NPDS to track calls related to the oil spill—including information calls and potential exposures—for 60 Poison Centers (PCs) in all 50 states. This enables CDC to track the number of Poison Center calls and potential health effects. The data are also being provided to the states so that they can follow up as needed.

Current NPDS data includes all calls received by the BP Deepwater Horizon Medical Support Line since the hotline was established on June 3, 2010.

Findings

Each weekday, access updates from the [National Poison Data System](http://www.aapcc.org/dnn/NewsandEvents/PoisonCentersandtheGulfOilSpill/tabid/472/Default.aspx) (<http://www.aapcc.org/dnn/NewsandEvents/PoisonCentersandtheGulfOilSpill/tabid/472/Default.aspx>).

Biosense

BioSense is a national program that conducts electronic surveillance of health information, and enables public health officials to track changes in a population's health status through access to existing data from healthcare organizations across the country. BioSense includes 86 coastal healthcare facilities in the five Gulf states (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) and staff are watching for specific syndromes (groupings of signs and symptoms) that could be related to the oil spill. CDC provides daily reports of the BioSense findings to the five Gulf States.

Environmental Surveillance

CDC has reviewed the results of EPA's sampling efforts in response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. In our review, CDC has used information on the health effects associated with the chemicals detected in the EPA's samples. CDC's review is designed to determine whether these pollutants in your community may cause health problems.

[Read more... \(environmental surveillance asp\)](#)

Findings (September 5 – September 18)

During this period, reviews of BioSense data have found no trends in the number of illnesses and injuries in the monitored healthcare facilities that would require further public health investigation.

Previous Updates:

[Findings \(August 22 – September 4\) \(health surveillance 101510.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(August 15 – August 21\) \(health surveillance 090310.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(August 8 – August 14\) \(health surveillance 082510.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(August 1 – August 7\) \(health surveillance 081310.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(July 25 – July 31\) \(health surveillance 081010.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(July 16 – July 24\) \(health surveillance 080410.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(July 8 – July 15\) \(health surveillance 072710.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(June 27 – July 7\) \(health surveillance 072110.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(June 20 – June 26\) \(health surveillance 070610.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(June 13 – June 19\) \(health surveillance 070610.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(June 6 – June 12\) \(health surveillance 070610.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(May 27 – June 5\) \(health surveillance 061810.asp#2\)](#)

[Findings \(May 3 – May 26\) \(health surveillance 061010.asp#2\)](#)

State Surveillance

Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi are using state-based surveillance systems to track oil spill-related health effects that might be related to occupational or non-occupational exposure. The states and CDC are collecting data from sources such as emergency departments, urgent care facilities, and poison centers for evaluation. States and CDC are regularly sharing data and summaries with each other. As of September 4, 2010, states had reported a few complaints of respiratory symptoms, nausea, and headache in people who had possible oil exposures. Surveillance reveals no trends of public health concern related to the oil spill.

To learn more about each state's system and findings, click on the state map below.



Previous Updates

[September 29, 2010 \(/gulfoils spill2010/2010gulfoils spill/health surveillance 101510.asp\)](#)
[September 3, 2010 \(health surveillance 090310.asp\)](#)
[August 25, 2010 \(health surveillance 082510.asp\)](#)
[August 13, 2010 \(health surveillance 081310.asp\)](#)
[August 11, 2010 \(health surveillance 081010.asp\)](#)
[August 4, 2010 \(health surveillance 080410.asp\)](#)
[July 27, 2010 \(health surveillance 072710.asp\)](#)
[July 21, 2010 \(health surveillance 072110.asp\)](#)
[July 6, 2010 \(health surveillance 070610.asp\)](#)
[June 18, 2010 \(health surveillance 061810.asp\)](#)
[June 10, 2010 \(health surveillance 061010.asp\)](#)

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