

*Scientific Review****Pesticides & Nerve Agents Sicken******Gulf War Veterans***

**“An increase of fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, eczema, and dyspepsia has been shown in deployed veterans.”**



Mounting evidence has shown that exposure to pesticides and nerve agents, such as organophosphate and carbamate acetylcholinesterase inhibitors (AChEis), is linked to Gulf War Illness.

Scientists at Department of Medicine, University of California, San Diego suggest that exposure to these agents is the likely cause of excess health problems seen in Gulf War Illness (Golomb, 2008).

Gulf War Illness is a syndrome reported by combat veterans of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Symptoms include chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, indigestion, memory problems, muscular aches and pains, headache, dizziness, loss of balance, shortness of breath, and skin irritation.

An increase of fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, eczema, and dyspepsia has been shown in deployed veterans when compared to non-deployed veterans (Eisen et al, 2005). This would indicate that Gulf War Illness is correlated to deployment.

Deployed veterans may have been exposed to nerve gas and pesticides in the course of duty. Scientific evidence has linked occupational exposure to these agents to chronic health symptoms that mirror those of Gulf War Illness.

Gulf War Illness is also linked to less efficient detoxification of these agents. Lower amounts of detoxifying enzymes and/or certain genotypes precipitate slower detoxification.

Gulf War Illness is very similar to fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, and multiple chemical sensitivity. Pesticides have also been linked to these illnesses in various studies. This would indicate that Gulf War Illness, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, and multiple chemical sensitivity may share a common cause... pesticides.

Pesticides are poorly regulated and often applied without regard for label instructions, which can lead to overexposure and ultimately ill health effects. There are many natural alternatives to harmful pesticides including keeping things neat and clean, employing integrative pest control, and choosing less toxic substances to eliminate pests.

Triclosan, also a registered pesticide, is an ingredient in common hand sanitizers which have claimed widespread use and increase exposure to this harmful chemical. Simple soap and water kills the same amount of germs without Triclosan.

The best cure is prevention.

**References**

Eisen SA, Kang HK, Murphy FM, Blanchard MS, Reda DJ, Henderson WG, Toomey R, Jackson LW, Alpern R, Parks BJ, Klimas N, Hall C, Pak HS, Hunter J, Karlinsky J, Battistone MJ, Lyons MJ. Gulf War veterans' health: medical evaluation of a U.S. cohort. *Ann Intern Med.* 2005 Jun 7;142(11):881-90.

Golomb, BA. Acetylcholinesterase inhibitors and Gulf War illnesses. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* March 10, 2008