

# Risk for monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance up in World Trade Center-exposed recovery workers

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World Trade Center (WTC)-exposed rescue/recovery workers have an increased risk for the myeloma precursor disease monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS), according to a study published online Aug. 22 in the *Blood Cancer Journal*.

Rachel Zeig-Owens, Dr.P.H., from the Montefiore Medical Center in Bronx, New York, and colleagues examined whether the elevated risk for the myeloma precursor disease, MGUS, identified among Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) WTC-exposed firefighters, was reproducible in a more heterogeneous WTC-exposed rescue/[recovery workers](#) cohort, the Stony Brook University-General Responder Cohort (SBU-GRC). The odds ratios and age-standardized risk ratios of MGUS (M-spike and light-chain-MGUS combined), M-spike, and light-chain-MGUS were estimated.

The researchers found that compared with the FDNY, the SBU-GRC had elevated odds of MGUS (odds ratio, 1.38; 95 percent confidence interval, 1.00 to 1.89). The age-standardized prevalence of MGUS was 9.0 per 100 persons, which was elevated more than twofold compared with the [general population](#). The age-standardized prevalence of light-chain MGUS was increased 3.5-fold.

"While a [randomized controlled trial](#) examining the risks and benefits of MGUS screening is ongoing and will provide clearer guidance on public health recommendations, if improved survival among MGUS-screened cohorts is demonstrated, the important findings from our current study provide evidence that screening of WTC-exposed cohorts should be recommended," the authors write.

Two authors disclosed financial ties to the biopharmaceutical industry.

**More information:** Rachel Zeig-Owens et al, Myeloma precursor disease (MGUS) among rescue and recovery workers exposed to the

World Trade Center disaster, *Blood Cancer Journal* (2022). DOI: [10.1038/s41408-022-00709-2](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41408-022-00709-2)

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