

Biden administration investigating mysterious ailments striking government personnel

14 May 2021



(HealthDay)—A mysterious illness that caused brain injuries to more than 130 spies, diplomats, soldiers, and other U.S. personnel overseas during the past few years is going to be vigorously investigated, *The New York Times* reported Wednesday.

The number of Americans affected is far more than has previously been reported. The initial 60 cases were in China and Cuba and did not include a group of CIA officers because that information is not public. The new total includes cases from Europe and elsewhere in Asia. At least three CIA officers reported serious health effects from episodes overseas. One occurred within the past two weeks, and all have required treatment at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center or other facilities, according to *The Times*.

In a 2019 case that had not been reported before, a military officer serving overseas was overcome

by nausea and headaches while driving. His 2-year-old son began crying. After the officer drove out of the intersection, his nausea stopped and the child stopped crying. Government officials believe the officer may have been targeted. That incident caused the Trump and Biden administrations to investigate further.

Officials have not determined who or what is responsible for the episodes or whether they are actually attacks. Some Pentagon officials believe Russia's military intelligence agency, the G.R.U., is most likely responsible, but [intelligence agencies](#) have not determined the cause or if a foreign country is involved, *The Times* said. Moscow has denied any involvement.

Some victims have suffered debilitating headaches, sudden-onset vertigo, nausea, and head or neck pain. Some victims have chronic symptoms and pain, which suggests possible permanent brain damage. Doctors at Walter Reed are concerned that [victims](#) may be at risk for suicide, *The Times* reported.

The mystery was reported first by diplomats and CIA officers in Havana in 2016 who were sickened with vertigo, [nausea](#), and headaches. Similar episodes have occurred in Russia, *The Times* said.

More information: [The New York Times Article](#)

Copyright © 2021 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

APA citation: Biden administration investigating mysterious ailments striking government personnel (2021, May 14) retrieved 19 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-05-biden-administration-mysterious-ailments-personnel.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.