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1: Lancet. 1991 Oct 26;338(8774):1027-32.

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Cancer mortality in workers exposed to chlorophenoxy herbicides and chlorophenols.

Saracci R, Kogevinas M, Bertazzi PA, Bueno de Mesquita BH, Coggon D, Green LM, Kauppinen T, L'Abbe KA, Littorin M, Lynge E, et al.

Unit of Analytical Epidemiology, International Agency for Research on Cancer, Lyon, France.

Epidemiological studies have revealed an increased risk of cancer, notably soft-tissue sarcomas and non-Hodgkin's lymphomas, in people occupationally exposed to chlorophenoxy herbicides, including those contaminated by 2, 3, 7, 8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (TCDD). We report here a historical cohort study of mortality in an international register of 18,910 production workers or sprayers from ten countries. Exposure was reconstructed through questionnaires, factory or spraying records, and job histories. Cause-specific national death rates were used as reference. No excess was observed in all-cause mortality, for all neoplasms, for the most common epithelial cancers, or for lymphomas. A statistically non-significant two-fold excess risk, based on 4 observed deaths, was noted for soft-tissue sarcoma with a standardised mortality ratio (SMR) of 196 and 95% confidence interval (CI) 53-502; this was concentrated as a six-fold statistically significant excess, occurring 10-19 years from first exposure in the cohort as a whole (SMR = 606 [165-1552]) and, for the same time period, as a nine-fold excess among sprayers (SMR = 882 [182-2579]). Risks appeared to be increased for cancers of the testicle, thyroid, other endocrine glands, and nose and nasal cavity, based on small numbers of deaths. The excess of soft-tissue sarcomas among sprayers is compatible with a causal role of chlorophenoxy herbicides but the excess does not seem to be specifically associated with those herbicides probably

contaminated by TCDD.

Publication Types:

- Clinical Trial
- Multicenter Study

PMID: 1681353 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

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