

Airborne Hazards/Burn Pit Exposures in Southwest Asia



Why this research is important:

VA's mission is to care for those who have "borne the battle". VA ORD emphasizes research that has real impact on Veterans' health and lives.

Summary:

Military servicemembers who were deployed to campaigns in Southwest Asia from Desert Shield and Desert Storm to the present have been exposed to airborne hazards including fine sand and dust carried in the air and toxic fumes from waste burning in open pits. Completed research demonstrates reduced lung function in some exposed veterans, but evidence for risk for specific lung or heart diseases is lacking. More research needs to be done to characterize health consequences of these exposures; to determine physiologic, pathological, and genetic risks for health consequences; and to prevent and treat adverse health effects.

How the research will improve Veterans' lives:

This airborne hazards research can improve prediction and mitigation of health effects and lead to earlier treatment and reduced disability.



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