

Combat Zones to Chronic Conditions: Examining the Long-Term Effects of Military Airborne Toxins

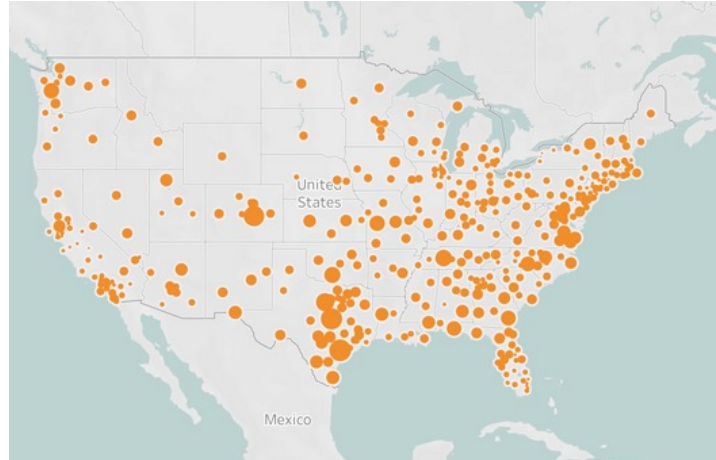
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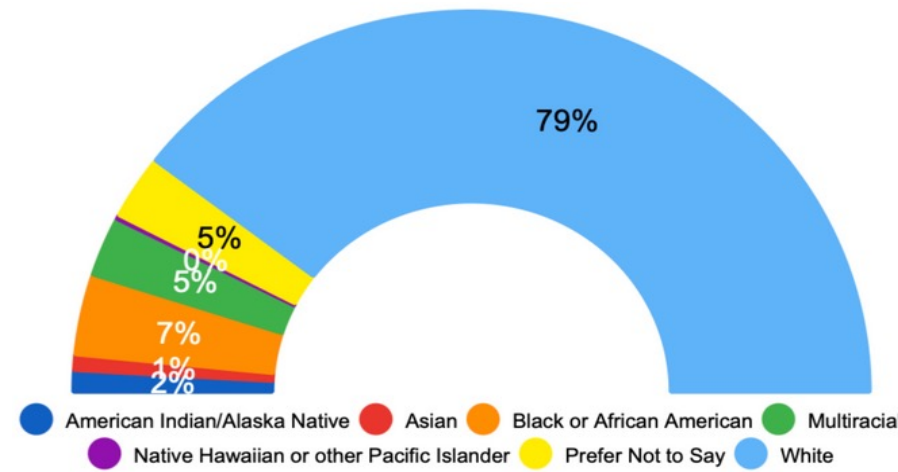
Introduction: Millions of post-9/11 deployed U.S. Veterans were exposed to airborne hazards such as particulate matter from desert dust, diesel fumes, and open-air burn pits. Burn Pits 360, a 501(C)3 non-profit, addresses Veteran health outcomes by maintaining an independent registry to document and monitor these exposures and their health impacts.

Methods: Through a voluntary online questionnaire, eligible Veterans and active service members document their exposures, report health concerns, and update comorbidity information.

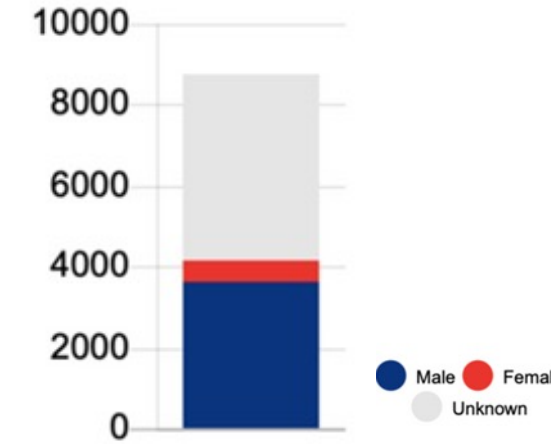
Registry Heat Map



Race



Gender



Enrollment



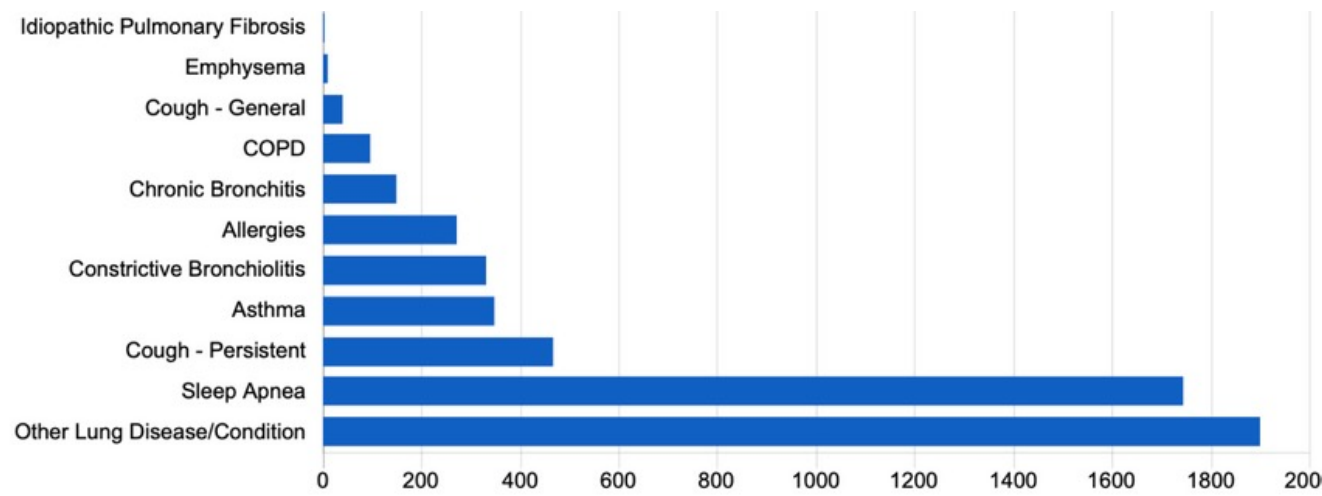
Respiratory System Summary Summary

69% of registrants reported having respiratory system symptoms and conditions.
 12% of veterans with respiratory system symptoms and conditions underwent lung biopsy*.
 17% of veterans with Constrictive Bronchiolitis are biopsy confirmed.

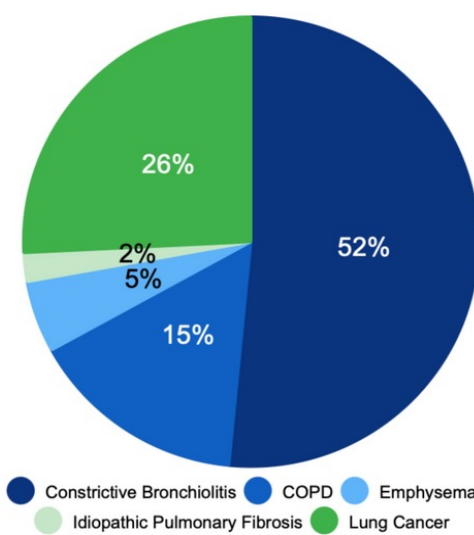
Cancer Summary Summary

Among military veterans exposed to burn pits, self-reported statistics reveal a concerning incidence of various cancers. The PACT Act now covers specific cancers that are being observed at a higher rate in this population compared to the general public.

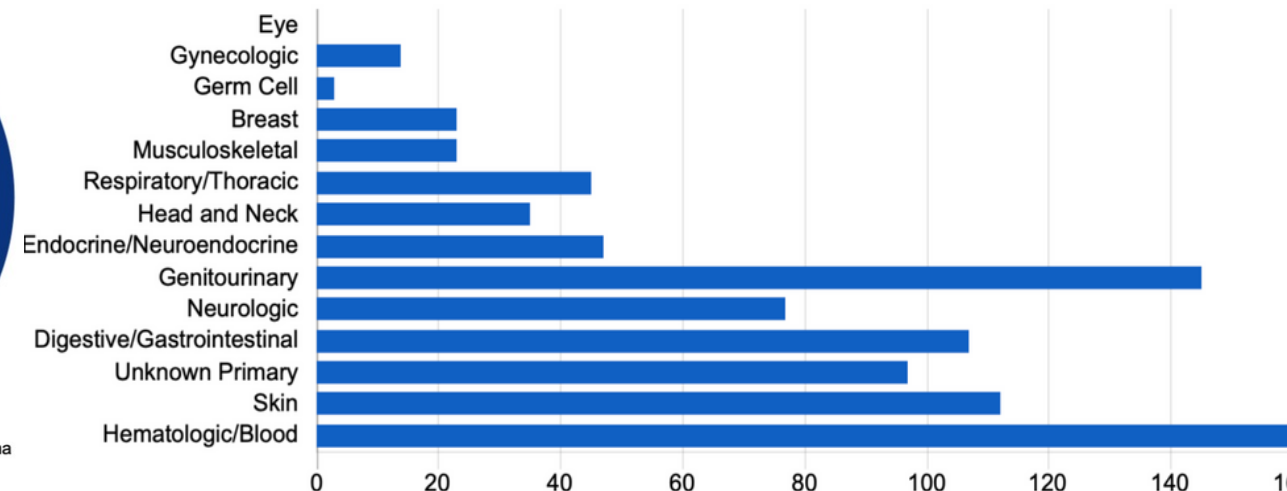
Self Reported Respiratory Conditions & Symptoms



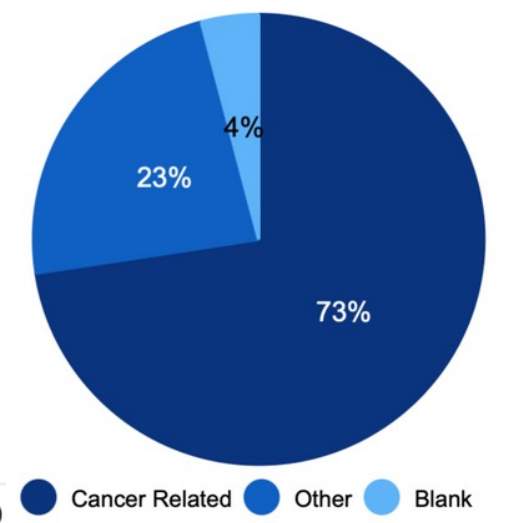
Lung Biopsy with Reported Diagnosis



Primary Cancer Organ System



Cause of Death



*A significant decrease (over 70%) was observed in reported lung biopsies around 2019. This decline may be attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused disruptions to the medical system across the country.

Significance to Veteran Health

Understanding the full scope of health impacts from burn pit exposure helps in planning and allocating resources for Veteran healthcare. This includes preparing for potential increases in specific healthcare needs and developing specialized treatment programs. The data collected helps us assess the health, legal, or social service needs of registrants, enabling us to provide critical resources and referrals. Robust monitoring can inform better healthcare planning and policy-making, ensuring Veterans receive the necessary support and advocacy for their service-related health concerns. *Corresponding Author: julietomaska@burnpits360.org