

Additional Assessment of Cancers in Houston 2000-2016: Summary

Background

In August 13, 2019, the state health department analyzed cancers in a 10-census tract area in Houston, Texas. Recently, additional cancer analyses were conducted because of continued concerns in this area near the former Union Pacific Railroad facility.

What We Did

The Houston Health Department told us about the health concerns of people living in these areas. To figure out if the number of cancer cases in this area were higher than normal, we did the following:

- Analyzed two additional types of adult (ages 20 years and older) cancers in a combined 10-census tract area using Texas Cancer Registry.
- Analyzed five types of adult cancers in specific census tracts using Texas Cancer Registry.
- Looked at those diagnosed with cancer from 2000 to 2016.
- Adjusted for differences in age, sex, and race/ethnicity, which are related to cancer risk.
- Compared number of cases in these areas to the number of expected cases.

What We Found

Adult cancers in expected range:

- Urinary bladder and biliary cancers

What We Found (continued)

Adult cancers above expected range in some census tracts:

- Liver (also elevated in the 10 census tracts combined)
- Esophagus
- Larynx (throat)
- Lung and bronchus

This analysis cannot tell us about the causes of cancers in this area. It only lets us compare the number of cancer cases to what we expect based on cancer rates in Texas. These results might be due to random chance alone. The health department could not account for lifestyle factors such as smoking or diet in this analysis.

The health department will continue monitoring cancer in the area, upon request, when new data is available.

Resources and More Information

About Cancer Clusters

cdc.gov/nceh/clusters/about.htm

What Causes Cancer?

cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/index

For questions, comments, or requests for the full report:

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