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Vietnam Veterans Mortality Study:

The study was designed to assess mortality patterns of U.S. servicemen in the Army or Marines who served during a portion of the Vietnam era (1965-1975). A sample of 75,000 veteran deaths was selected from the VA files. For each of the veteran deaths, military service and cause of death information were collected and coded. The two types of data were merged and analyzed to compare the mortality experience of veterans who served in Vietnam with veterans of the same era who did not serve in Vietnam. This study began in December 1982 and the final report was completed in December 1986.

Update of the Vietnam Veterans Mortality Study:

The Vietnam Veterans Mortality Study (VVMS) will provide the initial data on the mortality patterns of veterans who served in Vietnam and those who served elsewhere. However some of the diseases that were suggested as being associated with Agent Orange exposure or Vietnam service may take a long time to develop. For example, it takes about 20 years for certain cancers to manifest themselves if they are caused by environmental chemicals such as Agent Orange. We plan to periodically update the mortality data and monitor Vietnam veterans mortality patterns.

Retrospective Study of Dioxins and Furans in Adipose Tissue:

The VA, in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is performing a very detailed analysis of tissue specimens from approximately 200 males of the Vietnam era age group. The specimens are analyzed for 2,3,7,8-TCDD and several other related dioxins and furans to determine if service in the military, especially service in Vietnam has resulted in increased levels of these compounds as compared to non-Vietnam veterans or civilians of the same age group. The final report for this study, which began in October 1983 is targeted for December 1987.

Prospective Study of Dioxins and Furans in Adipose Tissue:

A recent study estimated the half-life of dioxin in adipose tissue to be 5-8 years. Therefore, among Army Vietnam veterans, dioxin in adipose tissue may still reflect exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam war. Prospective collection of adipose tissue specimens based on prescribed protocol will afford better control of factors that may influence the final outcome than retrospective specimen collection. This study will strengthen the retrospective study results and help to clarify the relationship between dioxin levels in the body and the risk of developing medical problems.

Soft Tissue Sarcoma Study:

In view of the concerns raised by many veterans and conflicting findings in the scientific literature, an independent epidemiologic study was undertaken to determine the relationship of Vietnam service, probable Agent Orange exposure and other factors to the risk of developing STS. This study began in March 1983 and the final report was completed in December 1986.

Cohort Mortality Study of Marine Vietnam Veterans:

The CDC Epidemiology Study of Vietnam veterans includes only Army veterans in the study. The VVMS results suggest a possible difference in mortality patterns between Army veterans and Marine veterans. This proposed study will determine the overall mortality rate as well as cause specific mortality rates of Marine veterans who served in Vietnam and those who served elsewhere. This study is designed to complement the CDC study.

Women Vietnam Veterans Mortality Study:

None of the studies that were already completed or on-going is specifically designed to study women Vietnam veterans. This cohort study will assess mortality experience of women veterans who served in Vietnam compared to those women veterans who served elsewhere during the Vietnam war.

Women Vietnam Veterans Health Study:

Public Law 99-272 mandates the conduct of an epidemiologic study of any long-term adverse health effects (particularly gender-specific health effects) which have been experienced by women who served in the Armed Forces of the U.S. in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam era. These include health effects which may have resulted from traumatic experiences during Vietnam service, or from exposure to phenoxy herbicides (including Agent Orange), other herbicides, chemicals, medications, environmental hazards, or from any other experience or exposure during such service. This study will assist in determining appropriate treatment of conditions, if any, possibly related to that experience. The contract for protocol development was awarded to the New England Research Institute in October 1986, with anticipated completion of protocol development in July 1987. The target date for awarding a contract for the conduct of the study is December 1987.

Case Control Study of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma:

Several epidemiologic studies suggested that individuals exposed to phenoxyherbicides had a substantial increase in risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL). A case control study is planned to investigate the possible association between NHL and Vietnam service, Agent Orange exposure or other possible environmental risk factors.

Health Surveillance of Vietnam Era Veterans:

The existing VA records, such as the Patient Treatment File (PTF) and Agent Orange Registry, will be monitored periodically to determine whether there are any unusual patterns or trends that may indicate a need for an in-depth review.