VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Karshi-Khanabad (K2)



Army troops follow an airman at Karshi-Khanbad Air Base United States Air Force, photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

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K2 Legislation

- National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2021 mandated DoD conduct epidemiologic study on health effects associated with deployment to K2
 - Contracted with Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory
 - Design & conduct an epidemiology study on health (morbidity) outcomes
- PL 116-315, Section 2010 passed DEC 2020, mandated VA contract with Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to assess health effects of K-2
 - Contract ratified with ATSDR MAR 2021
 - ATSDR provided summary report on Contaminants of Concern at K2 (based on DoD site surveys), report sent to Congress JAN 2023
 - ATSDR assist with community forum meetings
- K2 Surveillance Program (K2SP)
 - VA (Epidemiology Program, HOME) to implement and manage
 - Will assess morbidity & mortality over the next 10 years



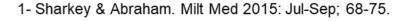


K2 History

- Former Soviet Airbase in SW Uzbekistan
- Occupied by US Forces 2001 2005 to support operations in Afghanistan (OEF)
- Environmental Risk Assessments (2001, 2002, 2004)
 - Heat, noise, and particulate matter (dust)
 - Exposures documented: jet fuel, asbestos, depleted uranium, nerve agents, and blister agents
 - Concentrations were low; contaminated areas were remediated
 - Overall assessment: risks were low and long-term medical monitoring was not needed (US Army Public Health Center Technical Information Paper 98-123-0720, updated July 2020)
 - Cancer incidence study (2015)¹
 - Limited to AD and only 10 yrs. post deployment follow-up
 - K2 SMs compared to S. Korea SMs (n=7,100)
 - Mixed results; after adjustment only melanoma and lymphatic/hematopoietic tissue (e.g., Hodgkin's Lymphoma) showed a higher incidence in K2 SMs
 - Only a few of each type of cancer in K2 (7 & 6, respectively); results inconclusive



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K2 Surveillance Program (K2SP)

- VA K2 Surveillance Program
- Entire K2 Roster 15,035 / 9,827 with at least 28 days of K2 deployment documented
 - Two comparison groups: (1) OEF deployed but never to K-2 and (2) OEF-era never deployed to SW Asia
 - 5:1 controls per case in each comparison group
 - Matched on
 - Age
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Branch of service
 - Component (active, NG, Reserves)
 - VHA utilization status
 - Longitudinal database based on health care claims from Military Health System and VHA; updated annually for morbidity assessments & comparisons
 - Mortality Data Repository for mortality assessments & comparisons
 - Morbidity & Mortality analyses will be conducted at periodic intervals over the next 10 years
 - Initial report on Morbidity late Summer of 2023 and Mortality by Winter of 2023
 - This approach allows for rapid response to emerging health concerns





K2 Actions to date

- K2 Veterans are eligible for Depleted Uranium (DU) testing at no cost
 - 138 DU samples collected to date
 - Negative DU isotopic signature found for all 135 assays
- K2 is approved as eligible location for the Airborne Hazards Registry
 - Registry updates go live Oct 2023
- K2 Community Engagement Panel 29 JUN 2023
 - To meet annually
 - Additional meetings may be scheduled when:
 - There are report results
 - To share changes in legislation / benefits / health care
- K2 Veterans are eligible for ALL PACT Act presumptions





PACT Act Presumptions and K2 Eligibility

DISEASES SPECIFIED	(1) The term 'covered veteran' means any veteran who—
(1) Asthma	(A) on or after August 2, 1990, performed active military,
(2) The following types of cancer:	naval, air, or space service while assigned to a duty station
(A) Head cancer of any type.	in, including airspace above—
(B) Neck cancer of any type.	(i) Bahrain;
(C) Respiratory cancer of any type.	(ii) Iraq;
(D) Gastrointestinal cancer of any type.	(iii) Kuwait;
(E) Reproductive cancer of any type.	(iv) Oman;
(F) Lymphoma cancer of any type.	(v) Qatar;
(H) Kidney cancer.	(vi) Saudi Arabia;
(I) Brain cancer.	(vii) Somalia; or
(J) Melanoma.	(viii) United Arab Emirates; or
(K) Pancreatic cancer.	(B) on or after September 11, 2001, performed active
(3) Chronic bronchitis.	military, naval, air, or space service while assigned to
(4) Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.	a duty station in, including airspace above—
(5) Constrictive bronchiolitis	(i) Afghanistan;
(6) Emphysema.	(ii) Djibouti;
(7) Granulomatous disease.	(iii) Egypt;
(8) Interstitial lung disease.	(iv) Jordan;
	(v) Lebanon;
(9) Pleuritis.	(vi) Syria;
(10) Pulmonary fibrosis.	(vii) Yemen;
(11) Sarcoidosis.	(viii) <mark>Uzbekistan;</mark> or
(12) Chronic sinusitis.	(ix) any other country determined relevant by the Secretary.
(13) Chronic rhinitis.	
(14) Glioblastoma. This list con	nprises over 300 presumptions





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Thank you for your service.

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