

Cancer of the pancreas and drinking water: A population-based case-control study in Washington county, Maryland

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A case-control study was done to assess a potential association between drinking water and pancreatic cancer in Washington County, Maryland. Cases of pancreatic cancer occurring from 1975 through 1989 were identified from the cancer registry. Controls were selected from the private 1975 census of Washington County. There were 101 cases and 206 controls. Chlorinated municipal water was used as a source of drinking water by 79% of cases and 63% of controls, yielding a significant odds ratio of 2.2. Adjustment for age and smoking had almost no effect on the risk, although both age and smoking were independently associated with an increased risk of pancreatic cancer. Although these findings must be interpreted with caution because of limitations in exposure assessment, these results have implications for the prevention of pancreatic cancer because chlorination of water is so widely practiced. © 1992 by The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health.