



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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13 April 2021

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RE Official information request WCDHB 9528

I refer to your email dated 21 February 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast DHB. Specifically:

- 1. I am enquiring about whether there is testing of the public other than workers who deal with the hazardous substance Sodium-fluoroacetate (1080)?**

Yes, testing of the public, other than workers who deal with 1080, is available but is not carried out routinely. Such testing would be undertaken in the event of an identified specific exposure to 1080. In that case, a blood sample would be required and it is important that blood for testing is taken within 48 hours of exposure. You can find more detail about sampling and testing for 1080 in blood at

<https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/partner-with-us/laboratories-and-diagnostics/toxicology-laboratory/sampling-protocols/protocol-for-sampling-and-testing-blood-plasma-for-1080/>

- 2. So, what is done to ensure 1080 exposure has not affected residents in areas of operations? Or just the general public.**

The public health permissions issued for 1080 operations impose a range of conditions which are designed to minimise the risk of exposure to the general public, including those who reside near operational areas. These conditions include exclusion distances from dwellings and public places and requirements on private and public water supplies. In the latter case, these can and usually do include a requirement for water to be tested for 1080 after the operation. You can find more detail on public health permissions and conditions at

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/issuing-permissions-vertebrate-toxic-agents-vtas-guidelines-public-health-units>

- 3. If I was a resident living on the West Coast could I go to my GP and ask for a test?**

Yes, you could but there would be a charge for the test unless it was required as part of public health investigation into an identified specific exposure. Please see the Landcare website above for charges. As already mentioned in the answer to your question 1 above, it is important that a blood sample for testing for 1080 is taken within 48 hours of the suspected exposure.

4. If I feel 1080 exposure may have affected me through my water how would I confirm this?

In order for someone to have been affected by 1080 through water consumption, 1080 would have had to be present in their water supply, so the first step would be to have the water supply tested for 1080. However, water testing for 1080 needs to be carried out within a short time after the 1080 operation to have the highest chance of detecting any residual 1080. There is further detail explaining water sampling for 1080 at

<https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/partner-with-us/laboratories-and-diagnostics/toxicology-laboratory/sampling-protocols/guideline-for-sampling-and-testing-water-associated-with-monitoring-of-aerial-1080-baiting-operations/>

As already mentioned in the answer to your question 1 above, it is important that a blood sample for testing for 1080 is taken within 48 hours of the suspected exposure.

If you suspect that you may have been exposed to 1080 in the past through water, then unfortunately there are no tests that can be done to confirm this now. The only ways to confirm potential exposure to 1080 through water would be to have tested either the water, the potentially exposed person or both for 1080 at the time.

5. If I was breastfeeding my baby how would this effect my child?

2008 Ministry of Health publications says , to date there are no epidemiology studies that have been carried out in relation to 1080 and Potential adverse effects and health effects on humans.

There is no information that the West Coast DHB is aware of on the risks of breastfeeding and 1080 exposure.

6. Why?

We are not in a position to form an opinion in response to this question.

I trust this satisfies your interest in this matter.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the West Coast DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely



Ralph La Salle
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Planning, Funding & Decision Support