

## Study: No sign of 'Katrina Cough'

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State and federal health officials found little evidence of respiratory problems in New Orleans residents prompted by post-Hurricane Katrina conditions.

Researchers from the state Office of Public Health and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention looked at emergency room visits between October and March and found more than 1 percent were for asthma and 7 percent for respiratory infection.

They looked at more than 56,000 visits and said the percentages virtually matched national averages.

Officials were worried that dampness and mold in the flooded homes and buildings would lead to what has been dubbed "Katrina Cough."

"We're not saying there is no problem," said Raoult Ratard, a state epidemiologist. "We're trying to say it's not the big huge 'Katrina Cough' that will keep you out of New Orleans."

The study found more people living in damaged and moldy homes had respiratory problems than those who didn't and more than those who worked to fix the homes.

The levels weren't significant, the New Orleans Times-Picayune reports.

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