

Links Between Disease and Environment

1 Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is committed to the  
2 advancement of medical research and is deeply concerned about the potential linkages  
3 between diseases such as cancers, asthma and birth defects and environmental toxins in  
4 our air, water, land and food.

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6 Studies have demonstrated clear links between some diseases and environmental  
7 exposures – such as the link between asbestos exposure and cancer of the lining of the  
8 lungs and between high carbon dioxide concentrations and asthma. But other studies –  
9 including many seeking an environmental explanation for geographical cancer clusters –  
10 have been inconclusive or contradictory. Many potential linkages have yet to be  
11 adequately researched and studied.

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13 Much more research is needed, but epidemiological studies can be expensive and difficult  
14 to construct. One of the most severe limitations to this type of research is the lack of an  
15 adequate system to collect data on the incidence of diseases and any associated  
16 environmental exposures.

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18 • Hadassah calls on the federal government to allocate increased funds to public and  
19 nonprofit scientific and medical research entities to study the links between  
20 environmental exposures and diseases.

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22 • Hadassah further calls on local, state and federal governments to work together to  
23 establish a nationwide health tracking system that would monitor the incidence of a  
24 wide array of diseases and environmental exposures in a manner that protects patient  
25 privacy.