

The PFAS Health Study
Cross-sectional Survey Participant Guidelines
Adult



**Australian
National
University**



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These guidelines include additional information to help you complete the PFAS Health Study survey.

The document is designed to help you fill out the survey and to answer any questions you may have, including definitions of a number of health and medical terms.

If you have a question about the survey that isn't covered in this document, please don't hesitate to call us on 1800 430 903, during business hours, or email us at pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au.

The guide follows the same format as the survey, and the contents page will allow you to navigate to the section you would like, just by clicking on the title.

Section A: PFAS Investigation and Management Areas

PFAS Investigation and Management Areas

Which PFAS Investigation and Management Areas are included in the PFAS Health Study?

RAAF Base Williamtown (New South Wales) - [Williamtown Map](#)

RAAF Base Tindal (Northern Territory) - [Katherine Map](#)

Army Aviation Centre Oakey (Queensland) - [Oakey Map](#)

If you have lived or worked in more than one Investigation or Management Area, please make sure you tick all answers that apply to you at Question A2.

Australian Defence Force

If you have worked for the Australian Government Department of Defence or as a contractor on Australian Defence Force Bases please detail your work history in Question A4. If you have worked at additional Defence Force Bases please list the most recent Bases under *Other* at Question A5.

Section B: Health conditions

IF YOU ARE UNSURE OF YOUR DIAGNOSIS OF A SPECIFIC CONDITION, PLEASE ANSWER NO.

Health terms and definitions

Health term	Definition
Cancer	Cancer is a term used for diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and can invade nearby tissues.
Tumour	A tumour is a growth of abnormal cells. It can be benign (not cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). Benign tumours do not cause problems unless they grow very large and press on nearby organs. Malignant tumours are made up of cancerous cells, grow much faster and can spread to nearby tissues or other parts of the body. These are known as metastases.
Brain cancer	All questions in this survey relating to brain cancer, refer to a malignant tumour (see definition of tumour) which started in the brain. A cancer that began in another part of the body and spread to the brain should not be recorded as 'brain cancer' in this survey (but can be recorded on page 6 of the survey).
Breast cancer	Breast cancer is a malignant tumour (see definition of tumour) of the breast tissue.
Leukaemia	Leukaemia is a cancer of the white blood cells that starts in the bone marrow. Leukaemia is often referred to as blood cancer.

Angina	Angina is the medical name for a pain or discomfort behind the breastbone that is caused by the lack of oxygen supply to the heart muscle. The pain is often described as tight, gripping, squeezing or the feeling of a heavy weight on the chest. It can vary from mild to severe.
Heart Attack	A heart attack, also known as a myocardial infarction, is caused by a complete blockage of an artery that supplies blood to a part of your heart muscle, causing damage to this part of the heart due to a lack of oxygen. This can be caused by a clot, or a build-up of plaque. Angina is one of the most common symptoms when experiencing a heart attack.
Stroke	A stroke happens when blood supply to the brain is interrupted and causes damage to the brain tissue due to a lack of nutrients and oxygen. Blood supply to the brain may be interrupted due to the blockage of an artery (also called an ischaemic stroke) or due to a brain artery that has burst (also known as a haemorrhagic stroke). A stroke is not the same as a transient ischemic attack (TIA) or mini stroke.
Lupus	Lupus is a chronic condition that results from a malfunctioning immune system. There are different types of lupus. The most common type is systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). In this survey we are not asking about drug induced lupus.
Diabetes	Diabetes is a condition where there is too much glucose (a type of sugar) in the blood. There are two types of diabetes – type 1 and type 2.
Type I diabetes	Type 1 diabetes is a condition where the body's immune system attacks the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. People with type 1 diabetes cannot produce insulin and need insulin injections to survive. Type 1 diabetes can occur at any age but tends to occur in childhood
Type II diabetes	Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. It is more common in people who are overweight or obese or who don't do enough physical activity. The body becomes resistant to the normal effects of insulin and the pancreas is unable to make enough insulin to keep up with the body's increased needs. Medications that lower blood sugar levels, and insulin, may be needed to manage the condition. Type 2 diabetes often runs in families.
Non-infectious hepatitis (Hepatitis not caused by an infection)	Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis can be caused by an infection (such as a virus) or by other causes (non-infectious hepatitis). The most common causes of non-infectious hepatitis are toxins, medications, an unhealthy lifestyle (e.g. excessive alcohol use and obesity), or an abnormal immune response where the body's immune system attacks the cells of the liver (auto-immune hepatitis).

Motor neurone disease	Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a group of conditions in which the nerve cells (also called neurons) that control our muscles fail to work normally. This causes the muscles to gradually weaken and lose their function. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Progressive Bulbar Palsy (PBP), Primary Lateral Sclerosis (PLS), and Progressive Muscular Atrophy (PMA) are all Motor Neurone Diseases.
Chronic Kidney Disease	Chronic kidney disease (CKD) refers to all conditions of the kidney, lasting at least 3 months, where a person has had evidence of kidney damage and/or reduced kidney function, regardless of the specific diagnosis of disease or condition causing the disease.

If there is a particular health condition not listed in the survey that you would like us to be aware of, please fill in the section on page 6 in both the adult and child survey

Section C: Health and wellbeing

Health term	Definition
Infertility	Infertility is the inability of a couple to become or stay pregnant after 12 months of unprotected sexual intercourse. The cause of the infertility can be due to female fertility problems, male fertility problems or a combination of both.
Pregnancy induced hypertension	Hypertension is the medical name for high blood pressure. Gestational hypertension or pregnancy induced hypertension is the rise of the blood pressure during pregnancy in a woman who otherwise has normal blood pressure.
Pre-eclampsia	Pre-eclampsia is diagnosed when high blood pressure occurs with one or more of the following after 20 weeks of pregnancy: protein in the urine; liver, kidney or blood clotting abnormalities; fluid on the lungs (pulmonary oedema); or the onset of headaches or visual symptoms.
Gestational diabetes	Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy. In most cases, the diabetes disappears after the delivery of the baby, but some women will continue to have high blood sugar levels. All standard antenatal care programs screen for gestational diabetes and most women will be diagnosed with this condition during the screening program.
Menopause	Menopause is the end to the monthly cycle of menstruations in the life of a woman. It means that the ovaries stop producing eggs, leaving the woman unable to become pregnant. You will know that menopause has taken place if you have not had any menstrual bleeding for 12 consecutive months.

Pregnancy section

Questions C5 to C10 are specific to each pregnancy you have had. Pregnancy 1 should refer to your first pregnancy, Pregnancy 2 to your second pregnancy and so on. We have provided enough space to complete details for up to 12 pregnancies. If you require space for additional pregnancies please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

Section D to F

If you have any specific questions about how to complete this section please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

Section G: Residential exposure to PFAS

The questions in this section are specifically for participants who live or have lived in a PFAS Investigation or Management Area. If you have never lived in a PFAS Investigation or Management Area you do not need to complete this section.

Residential history

Questions G1 to G4 are specific to each residence you have lived in which is in a PFAS Investigation or Management Area. Residence 1 should refer to your most recent property, Residence 2 to your second most recent property and so on. We have provided enough space to complete details for up to 6 residences. If you require space for additional residences please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

Section H: Occupational exposure to PFAS

Occupational exposure to Aqueous Film Forming Foam (Firefighting Foams)

Aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) is a highly effective flame suppressing foam, commonly used in the aviation industry to extinguish aircraft fires.

Questions H2 to H7 are specific to each job you where you were exposed to AFFF. Job 1 should refer to your current or most recent job where you were exposed to AFFF, Job 2 to your next most recent job where you were exposed to AFFF and so on. We have provided enough space to complete details for up to 3 jobs. If you require space for additional jobs please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

Question H5 – How do I describe my exposure to AFFF?

We are interested in your direct exposure to AFFF through your current or previous job. You should include details about the type of exposure you had to AFFF. For example, you could describe skin exposure (through touching) AFFF or inhalation of AFFF by-products.

Question H6 – What if my exposure to AFFF varied in frequency for a job?

You should tick the box associated with your most common exposure frequency for the job. For example, if you were only exposed to AFFF every day for one month of the year for the job, but less than once a week for all other months of the year, you should tick the box for less than once a week.

Occupational exposure to PFAS other than AFFF

The following industries use PFAS: chrome and metal plating industries; automotive industry; aviation industry; manufacture of building products (tile coatings, stone coatings, paint, vanishes, sealants); manufacture of food packaging and food preparation products (baking paper, aluminium foil, fast food wrappers and non-stick equipment); manufacturing of textiles, leather, upholstery, carpets, clothing and shoes.

Questions H9 to H12 are specific to each job you where you were exposed to PFAS other than AFFF. Job 1 should refer to your current or most recent job where you were exposed to PFAS other than AFFF, Job 2 to your next most recent job where you were exposed to PFAS other than AFFF and so on. We have provided enough space to complete details for up to 3 jobs. If you require space for additional jobs please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

Questions H9 to H12 should only be completed if you were directly exposed to PFAS other than AFFF in your job. If you worked in an industry that uses or used PFAS other than AFFF but were not exposed to it through your job please do not complete these questions. For example, if you were an administrative worker in a textile manufacturing plant you would not have come into direct contact with PFAS and should not complete these questions.

Section I: Additional exposure to PFAS

Aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) (firefighting foam) is a highly effective flame suppressing foam, commonly used in the aviation industry to extinguish aircraft fires. These firefighting foams were occasionally used for purposes other than fighting fires. For example, people may have been exposed to AFFF at a community event—playing in foam or sliding down a slide covered in foam.

This section does not relate to occupational exposure to AFFF.

Questions I2 to I4 are specific to each exposure you have had to AFFF. Exposure 1 should refer to the most common activity where you were exposed to AFFF, Exposure 2 to the next most common activity where you were exposed to AFFF and so on. We have provided enough space to complete details for up to 3 different exposures. If you require space for

additional exposures please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

Question I2– How do I describe my exposure to AFFF?

We are interested in your direct exposure to AFFF through a specific activity. You should include details about the type of exposure you had to AFFF. For example, you could describe skin exposure (through touching) AFFF or inhalation of AFFF by-products.

Section J: Background Information

If you have any specific questions about how to complete this section please contact the study team on 1800 430 903 or pfas.health.study@anu.edu.au

The answers you have provided will be made non-identifiable and combined with other people's answers.

We will then use these results to better understand the potential health effects of PFAS.

If this survey raised feelings of anxiety or depression please contact your GP who can refer you to appropriate mental health and counselling services in your region.

Alternatively, there are services you can contact day or night that can help you if you are feeling distressed or in crisis.

If you ever feel unsafe you can also contact your local crisis team through the suicide call-back service, or go to the emergency department of your local hospital for help. For urgent medical help, you can call an ambulance on 000 (or if you are on a mobile and that doesn't work, you can call 112).

Support Service	Phone Number
LIFELINE	13 11 14 (free call from mobiles)
Suicide Call-Back Service	1300 659 467
<i>Beyondblue</i> Support Service	1300 224 636
<i>Kids Helpline (13 to 25 years of age)</i>	1800 55 1800 (free to call)
<i>MensLine Australia</i>	1300 789 978
State-based mental health / crisis services	NSW 1800 011 511 QLD 1300 642 255 NT 1800 682 288