

For Your Health

Community Health Status Assessment in Creighton and Flin Flon

Following the testing for heavy metals in the surface soil in Flin Flon and Creighton, a community health study was completed for these communities by public health officials from Manitoba Health and Healthy Living and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health.

A community health status assessment examines the overall health of a population. This study compares the overall health status of these communities to the overall health status of other residents in the NOR-MAN and Mamawetan Churchill River health regions, as well as all residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. This study reviewed a number of common health conditions and health determinants over a 10 year period, from 1996 through 2005.

Cancer

- For men and women, cancer incidence was not elevated in Flin Flon and Creighton, compared to the Manitoba and NOR-MAN health region rates.
- There were no specific types of cancer (ex: lung, breast, colorectal) that were significantly greater in these communities, compared to Manitoba or Saskatchewan.
- For men and women combined, overall and premature death rates due to cancer are lower in Flin Flon and Creighton, compared to the NOR-MAN health region, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Death Rates

- Overall death rates were not higher than overall death rates in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
- Like the other populations studied, the major causes of death in Flin Flon and Creighton are circulatory diseases and cancer.
- Most early deaths in Flin Flon and Creighton are due to injuries. More early deaths due to injuries occur in Flin Flon compared to Manitoba and Saskatchewan populations.
- The overall death rates due to respiratory disease are higher than the provincial rates. However, early deaths due to respiratory disorders occur significantly less often in these communities than the other populations studied. Information on community smoking levels and previous smoking rates were not available for this study.

The findings from this study indicate that the health status in Flin Flon and Creighton is generally as good if not better than provincial averages. Manitoba and the Saskatchewan's public health officials note that health is affected by a number of influences, including income and social status, education, employment, man-made and natural environments, health services, health behaviours and more.

In addition to the community health status assessment, a human health risk assessment is currently underway. The human health risk assessment will provide a comprehensive assessment of possible human exposures to metals in Flin Flon and Creighton to determine if the level of exposure may be enough to produce a higher risk for an adverse health outcome.

A preliminary health risk assessment on the effects of heavy metals in Flin Flon and Creighton conducted in the spring of 2007 concluded that the risk to human health is likely low, but a more comprehensive assessment was recommended. This will be completed in 2009.

If you have question about your health, contact Healthline (Saskatchewan) at 1-877-800-0002 or Health Links-Info Santé (Manitoba) at 1-888-315-9257. Information on the human health risk assessment can be found at www.flinflonsoilsstudy.com.



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