What are the Effects of Climate-Related Risks on Public Health?

A summary of National Climate Assessment information from the U.S. Global Change Research Program about the public health risks associated with climate change.

OVERVIEW FROM GAO-16-122

Human Health Risks Posed by Climate Change – **Examples from the Third National Climate Assessment**



Source: U.S. Global Change Research Program's third National Climate Assessment

The Third National Climate Assessment Reports that Health Impacts from Climate Change are Expected to Vary Across Populations and Regions

Climate change is expected to exacerbate existing health disparities, especially for groups such as the elderly, children, those that are sick, and those that are living in poverty.



The map below displays examples of potential health impacts in the U.S. as identified in the third National Climate Assessment.



temperatures rise.

Allergies may become more common and severe as pollen seasons grow longer due to more frost-free days.

higher than in surrounding areas.



Water-borne illnesses may result from disruptions to community water supplies and sewage systems as permafrost—frozen ground that can support infrastructure—continues to thaw.





Source: U.S. Global Change Research Program's third National Climate Assessment

GAO Examined Some Related Activities of the Federal Government



Enhancing research on the risks of climate change to public health



Raising public awareness of climate change as a public health issue



Supporting the efforts of state and local health authorities

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