

NCI and NIEHS Collaborative Research on Breast Cancer and the Environment

Lynch SM¹, Anderson L¹, Winn DE¹, Reinlib L², Maull EA², Collman GW²

¹ Epidemiology and Genetics Research Program, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health

² National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health

Abstract:

Since the early 1990s, the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Epidemiology and Genetics Research Program (EGRP), together with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), has funded three large-scale initiatives investigating relationships between environmental exposures and risk for breast cancer—the **New England/Middle Atlantic (NE/MA) Breast Cancer Study**, the **Long Island Breast Cancer Study Project (LIBCSP)**, and presently, the four **Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Centers (BCERCs)**. NE/MA and the LIBCSP have played important roles in understanding reasons for the high rates of breast cancer in some regions of the country, and they have provided valuable research results that have fairly conclusively ruled out several suspected environmental agents. Now with LIBCSP data, researchers are aggressively pursuing studies of gene-environment interactions. A geographic information system for Long Island also is available that researchers are invited to use in exploring relationships between environmental exposures and breast cancer. The ongoing BCERCs focus on determinants of puberty in young girls, as well as in animal models, and the effect of environmental factors on this process. Congressional mandates for research, the emergent role of breast cancer advocates in the research process, and the research findings themselves have made and continue to make the study of breast cancer and the environment scientifically and socially unique. EGRP Web site: epi.grants.cancer.gov. LI GIS Web site: www.healthgis-li.com. BCERC Web site: www.bcerc.org.