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Supplemental Material

Serum Perfluorooctanoate (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) Concentrations and Liver Function Biomarkers in a Population with Elevated PFOA Exposure

Valentina Gallo^{1,2}, Giovanni Leonardi¹, Bernd Genser^{3,4}, Maria-Jose Lopez-Espinosa¹, Stephanie J Frisbee⁵, Lee Karlsson¹, Alan M Ducatman⁶, Tony Fletcher¹

¹Social and Environmental Health Research (SEHR), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK

²School of Public Health, Imperial College London, London, UK

³Mannheim Institute of Public Health, Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany

⁴Instituto de Saúde Coletiva, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil

⁵Department of Community Medicine and Center for Cardiovascular and Respiratory Sciences, West Virginia University School of Medicine, Morgantown, WV, USA

⁶Department of Community Medicine, West Virginia University School of Medicine, West Virginia, USA

Detail of between- and within-regression models

Water district data available in the C8 Health Project questionnaire data were considered: using the geocoded locations of the address, combined with a detailed mapping of streets covered by each water districts piped water supplies, geocoded residences could be assigned a water district code. These analyses were restricted to those living in the six contaminated districts (Little Hocking Water Association of Ohio; City of Belpre, Ohio; Tupper Plains–Chester District of Ohio; Village of Pomeroy, Ohio; Lubeck Public Service District of West Virginia; Mason County Public Service District of West Virginia) at the time of the survey ($n=26,777$). For each water districts, on the ln-transformed scale, a mean PFOA value and a deviation from the mean for each individual was calculated as the difference between the individual level and the water district mean. Regression coefficients with relative standard errors (SE) and p-values were calculated for the association within water district and between water districts with both the mean ln-PFOA values, and the individual deviations, in a fully adjusted linear regression model. The significance of the difference between these within and between water district coefficients was also assessed. Models also included a random effect at the water district level.

Formal model description:

To estimate within and between water district ($i=1, \dots, 6$) coefficients relating log serum PFOA in individual j in that district ($x_{i,j}$) to numerical outcomes ($y_{i,j}$), we fit the model:

$$y_{i,j} = a + \beta_w(d_{i,j}) + \beta_b \bar{x}_i + \{\text{covariate terms}\} + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{i,j} \quad ,$$

$$\text{Where } d_{i,j} = (x_{i,j} - \bar{x}_i), \alpha_i \sim N(0, \sigma_b^2), \text{ and } \varepsilon_{i,j} \sim N(0, \sigma_w^2)$$

To test the hypothesis $\beta_w = \beta_b$, we re-parameterised this relationship writing $\beta_{\text{diff}} = \beta_w - \beta_b$, giving:

$$E(y) = a + \beta_w(x_{i,j}) + \beta_{\text{difference}}\bar{x}_i + \{\text{covariate terms}\}$$

We used the Wald test for $\beta_{\text{diff}} = 0$ as a test for $\beta_w = \beta_b$.

For dichotomous outcomes we fit analogous logistic models, except that instead of fitting a random effect at water district level, which was computationally cumbersome, we used a sandwich (Huber-White) estimator of variance clustering by water district.