

# Iraq War Crimes: Birth Defects and Miscarriages in Fallujah

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In-depth Report: [IRAQ REPORT](#)

Increase in time of birth defects and miscarriages in Fallujah since 2003 and its association with toxic metals load in the population and in newborns and children with birth defects and their families

We have published today on the Newweapons web site ( [www.Newweapons.org](http://www.Newweapons.org) ) a full scientific investigation on the birth defects increase in Fallujah.

Unusually high frequency of birth defects and miscarriages was observed over the years following 2003, with gradual increase since then and with birth defects frequencies not decreasing up to November 2010.

For 2010, medical sources in Fallujah reported to us 14.7% of birth defects. This is about 10 folds higher compared to the frequencies in the same families in the years 1991-2001. Also miscarriage rates have increase considerably over the time from 2003.

The modalities of the presentation of the birth defects in 56 families studied and in their immediate kin (1256 people) indicates that genetic and epigenetic mechanisms, post-mutational, but potentially transmissible to the progeny, may be responsible of the events.

The finding suggest that continuing environmental contamination due to war associated and long lasting contaminants, like teratogenic metals, could be determining the reproductive damage.

The high rate of birth defects is associated with an increase in the hair the hair of children and adults of metals components of weaponry used in the recent wars in Iraq, but also in Lebanon and Gaza and Afghanistan. The study presented here can be seminal also for the decreased reproductive health in these countries.

From the analysis of metals in hair of 43 children with birth defects and 103 their parents, and of 11 healthy newborns and 16 their parents is shown that metal contamination is diffuse in the whole population of the town of Falluhja and is present already in newborn children hair.

The authors report that absolute levels of teratogenic and carcinogenic contaminants (Vanadium, Cobalt, Molybden, Uranium and Lead) were significantly higher in Iraqi than in controls from other areas, with Lead levels in children with birth defects and Uranium in their parents higher respectively than that in other newborns or parents of normal Falluhja

children.

The composite metal load might be a major factor in the increase in time of events that lead to birth defects and miscarriages registered in the last years.

### **Notes:**

Notwithstanding the attention upon pre-enquiry for this science manuscript from various scientific Journals, including prestigious ones, there have been political and other pressures that suggested to choose press modality of publication. The Iraqi authors retired their assent to publish in scientific Journals, blocking de facto an already done submission to Lancet.

This pressure was achieved by the use of improper methods of intimidation first and then under the claim of disagreement in results with those of other undisclosed reports. We believe that this was a political action with modalities outside those customary in science, and for aims that elude acquisition of knowledge of facts and open confrontation through collaboration or through publication of studies.

We identify as final aim of these studies the need to contribute to develop tools to improve the reproductive health of the populations of victims of long-term effects of war and all the studies done will contribute to this aim.

We chose therefore to send to press this contribute to future scientific memory and for what we consider to be the best information of all parties involved in the long term damages in all the countries interested.

The work is presented in the name of only one of the contributing authors, to save the other consenting authors from the treats we received.

The author that is presenting the report is responsible for the project design and coordinated the research, received the release of the clinical data and hair samples from the General Hospital of Falluhja and that of the analytical data from an internationally certified laboratory.

We strongly hope that more studies will be done and published on this matter, that eventual scientific differences in results will be dealt by preliminary honest confrontation among the scientists, doing the next useful steps to find truth and eventual mistakes, or be done openly after data publication.

We are issuing a call for independent research in the field to international Institutions and the wide scientific community.

### **Authors' contributions to the study**

*Two medical doctors in the general hospital of Fallujah were responsible for the registration and collection of data and patients consent, for the clinical diagnosis and for the collection of hair samples.*

*Two analytical chemistry professors in Italy were responsible for the procedures of preparation and analysis of hair samples.*

*A medical doctor was responsible for the statistical analysis of the data, their rationalization*

and contributed with the corresponding tables and to the writing of the manuscript.

**Paola Manduca** designed the experiments, prepared the historical registration protocol, coordinated the work, wrote the manuscript, prepared the figures and tables, and was responsible for the interpretation of the data.

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