



## Time for change

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### Nuclear power station causing cancer

An official study from the German government shows the risk of getting cancer is increasing for children growing up in the neighborhood of a nuclear power station. This is in particular true for leukemia, a special case of cancer.

#### The closer to the nuclear power station, the higher the risk of leukemia and cancer

In Germany, all cases of cancer of children are being recorded. Therefore it was possible to investigate into the cases of children's cancer between the years 1980 and 2003. There were 1592 children of age less than five years who got the disease and 4735 healthy children involved in the study.

The result showed a significantly higher risk to get cancer if the children lived within a circle of less than 5 km around a nuclear power plant:

According to the normal statistical values, there should have been 48 cases of cancer and 17 cases of leukemia within the above mentioned circle of 5 km around the atomic power plants.

However there were 77 cases of cancer (60% more than expected) and 37 cases of leukemia (117% more than expected).

A person directly involved in the study mentioned to Spiegel online, that there might be a higher risk for leukemia even within a circle of 50 km around nuclear power plants.

On Swiss radio, the leader of the study, Mrs. Maria Blettner said: "We could indeed statistically proof that the risk for small children to get cancer is increased if they grow up in the neighborhood of a nuclear power station. However we do not know what is causing this increased risk. According to our knowledge the radioactive radiation is too low to cause it."

And further: "We cannot draw any conclusion for adults - simply because we do not collect the respective data in Germany"

#### This results confirms other studies about radioactive radiation causing cancer even in small dose

However there are a number of international studies, who revealed the increased risks for getting cancer even at very small dose of radiation - some factors below the allowed limits. So the result of the study cannot be that surprising. It only seems to be the first study, which proves that **the risk for children to get cancer is increasing the closer they live to a nuclear plant.**

Although Germany has already decided to phase out nuclear power plants by 2020, this study is now heating up the discussion whether the phase out of nuclear technology should be accelerated.

Link to the study: [Epidemiologische Studie zu Kinderkrebs in der Umgebung von Kernkraftwerken \(KIKK-Studie\)](#)

Source:

Kaatsch P, Spix C, Schulze-Rath R, Schmiedel S, Blettner M. Leukaemia in young children living in the vicinity of German nuclear power plants. *Int J Cancer* (2007), doi:10.1002/ijc.23330.

Spix C, Schmiedel S, Kaatsch P, Schulze-Rath R, Blettner M. Case-Control Study on Childhood Cancer in the Vicinity of Nuclear Power Plants in Germany 1980-2003. *Eur J Cancer* (2007), doi :10.1016/j.ejca.2007.10.024. 2007

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**For whom enough is too little - nothing is ever enough.**