

Study shows La. is lower in most forms of cancer

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With the exception of lung cancer in white men, common forms of cancer strike people in Louisiana's industrial corridor at rates that are lower than nationwide cancer rates, an LSU researcher said Thursday.

A study found that white men in the region have a 19-percent greater risk of getting lung cancer than white men in other parts of the country, said Dr. Vivien Chen, assistant professor of pathology at LSU Medical Center in New Orleans.

The study sheds no light on the cause of the increased rate of lung cancer, and more studies must be conducted before that matter can be resolved, Chen said.

Possible causes of the increased lung cancer rate among white men include cigarette smoke, poor diet and exposure to carcinogens on the job, she said.

Environmentalists have long dubbed the region "Cancer Alley," because tons of cancer-causing chemicals are released to the environment by industries in the corridor.

Gov. Edwin Edwards in March wrote President Clinton to tell him that "We have no 'Cancer Alley' in Louisiana."

Edwards pointed to an earlier study by Chen that found cancer rates for all of South Louisiana were the same or lower than national rates.

Before unveiling the study at a forum hosted by the Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center, Chen said the study of can-

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