

An Exploration of Health Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing: A Scoping Review

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Hydraulic fracturing is a controversial oil and gas extraction method used in the US. Many believe hydraulic fracturing has negative environmental and human health impacts. A scoping study was performed to identify peer-reviewed studies exploring human health impacts related to hydraulic fracturing. Only 13 studies were identified that met these requirements. All of these studies were published within the last four years. Three studies found no human health impacts. Most of the remaining studies found respiratory and dermatologic manifestations. As the distance increased between where the subjects lived and fracturing activity, manifestations generally decreased. Although few studies have identified actual health impacts, it seems possible long-term health impacts may emerge in the future. In light of these findings, primary care providers should have an increased index of suspicion of serious systemic medical conditions when caring for patients who have lived in areas in which oil and gas exploration is common.