



Society for Risk Analysis New England Chapter

2015-2016 Event Series

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Thursday, October 8, 2015

Refreshments: 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Presentation: 6:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Discussion: 6:30 – 6:50 pm

THRESHOLDS AND SUSCEPTIBILITY IN CANCER DOSE-RESPONSE

ADAM M. FINKEL, SC.D.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Location

Harvard Law School

Wasserstein Hall, First Floor, Room 1010

1585 Massachusetts Ave.

Cambridge, MA

Please RSVP by Friday, October 2nd to Heather Lynch (hlynch@gradientcorp.com).

Space is limited, so reserve your seat today. For more information on SRA-NE, please go to: www.sra-ne.org



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IGNORING THRESHOLDS AND SUSCEPTIBILITY IN CANCER DOSE-RESPONSE: ERRORS OF OPPOSITE SIGN AND DIFFERENT MERIT

Of the two most fundamental over-simplifications in carcinogen risk assessment, one is currently the subject of relentless scrutiny while the other persists with hardly a pang of regret. The former assumption holds that non-zero risks persist at concentrations below those associated with observable increases in disease, while the latter states that all human beings (other than a tiny footnote for children) face an equal cancer risk at any common exposure level. The “no-threshold” assumption and the “no susceptibility” simplification introduce opposite errors into risk estimation; one can lead to over-regulation, while the other to under-regulation. But just as two countervailing wrongs do not make for a single right, the possibility exists that only one of the two assumptions is truly in error—so “fixing” the error that doesn’t apply and perpetuating the erroneous one would doubly degrade the quality of risk assessment. In this seminar, I will argue that ignoring human interindividual variability in susceptibility must bias estimates of regulatory benefits; on the other hand, the existence of a threshold somewhere on the dose-response continuum does not necessarily change the estimated risk at the reduced exposure levels sought by actual regulatory interventions.

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Dr. Adam M. Finkel is currently Executive Director of the Penn Program on Regulation at the University of Pennsylvania, where he is also a Senior Fellow at the Penn Law School, and is Clinical Professor of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of Michigan, School of Public Health. From 2004 to 2007, he was a Visiting Professor of Public and International Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University. From 2000 to 2003, Dr. Finkel was Regional Administrator for the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in Denver, Colorado, responsible for regulatory enforcement, compliance assistance, and outreach activities in the six-state Rocky Mountain region (Region VIII). From 1995 to 2000, he was Director of Health Standards Programs at OSHA headquarters, and was responsible for promulgating and evaluating regulations to protect the nation’s workers from chemical, radiological, and biological hazards.

Dr. Finkel holds an Sc.D. in environmental health sciences from the Harvard School of Public Health, a master’s degree in public policy from Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, an A.B. in biology from Harvard College, and is a Certified Industrial Hygienist. He is one of three scholars who served on both the “Blue Book” (1994) and “Silver Book” (2009) committees of the National Academy of Sciences convened to evaluate EPA’s risk assessment methods. He is co-author of four books, including the 2014 volume *Does Regulation Kill Jobs?* (Univ. of Pennsylvania Press). In 2006, he received the David P. Rall Award for Advocacy in Public Health from the American Public Health Association, for “a career in advancing science in the service of public health protection.” In 2013, he received the Alumni Leadership in Public Health Practice award from the Harvard School of Public Health. He lives in Pennington, New Jersey, with his wife (a clinical psychologist) and 15-year-old daughter; he is also a professional singer and choral conductor.

GETTING TO THE EVENT



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Directions to Wasserstein Hall and a map of the Harvard Law School campus:

<http://hls.harvard.edu/about/campus-map-and-directions/>

From the MBTA Subway (on foot):

Take the Red Line train (towards Alewife) to Harvard Square. From Harvard station, either walk north through Harvard Yard to the Law School or take the Church Street exit from the T station, and walk north on Massachusetts Avenue to the Law School. Click for [walking directions](#).

By Bus:

Several MBTA bus lines stop in Harvard square; refer to the MBTA website for routes and schedules.

Driving Directions:

From the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90): Take the Cambridge/Allston exit (exit 18 from the west, exit 20 from the east). Follow the Cambridge signs off the ramp to the traffic lights. Stay in the middle lane while crossing the bridge. Proceed straight across the bridge onto River Street. Stay in the left lane and follow River Street into Central Square, the first major traffic intersection. Travel straight across the intersection. (Here the street becomes Prospect Street.) At the second traffic light, turn left onto Broadway. Follow Broadway until you must bear right at the fire station, onto Quincy Street. Move into the left lane and turn left at the light onto Cambridge Street. Proceed down through the underpass and move into the far right lane which feeds into Massachusetts Avenue. The Law School buildings begin on the right, approximately one block farther.

From I-93: Take exit 26 for Storrow Drive, using right lane and following signs for Storrow Drive. Take left lane exit for Government Center/Kendall Square/3 North and bear right at sign for Kendall Square. Proceed across bridge onto Broadway. Follow Broadway for two miles until you must bear right at the fire station, onto Quincy Street. Move into the left lane and turn left at the light onto Cambridge Street. Proceed through the underpass and move into the far right lane which feeds into Massachusetts Avenue. The Law School buildings begin on the right.

From I-95 / Route 128: From Route 128 (I-95), take the exit for Route 2 East to Arlington and Boston. Travel approximately 6.5 miles, approaching the rotary from left lane. Bear left, following signs for 3 North and 16 East to Medford. At the first light, turn right onto Massachusetts Avenue. Proceed 1.8 miles to Everett Street on the left (15th traffic light). The Law School begins here, on the left.

Parking is available along Massachusetts Avenue (meter parking on both sides). There is also a parking garage at 10 Everett Street, but a pass must be purchased and printed [here](#) prior to arrival. Login as a guest and use departmental code 1006.