Conducts, fosters, and coordinates (in its own laboratories and through contracts, grants, and support of Environmental Health Sciences Centers) research and research training on the biological effects of chemical, physical, and biological substances in the environment to:

- Develop understanding of the mechanism of action of such substances;
- Provide the scientific basis for evaluating their extent and severity on a national scale;
- Establish the toxicity of chemical substances of significant public health concern;
- Define and develop methods for diagnosis and treatment of environmentally induced illnesses; and
- Collect and disseminate information in furtherance of the program.