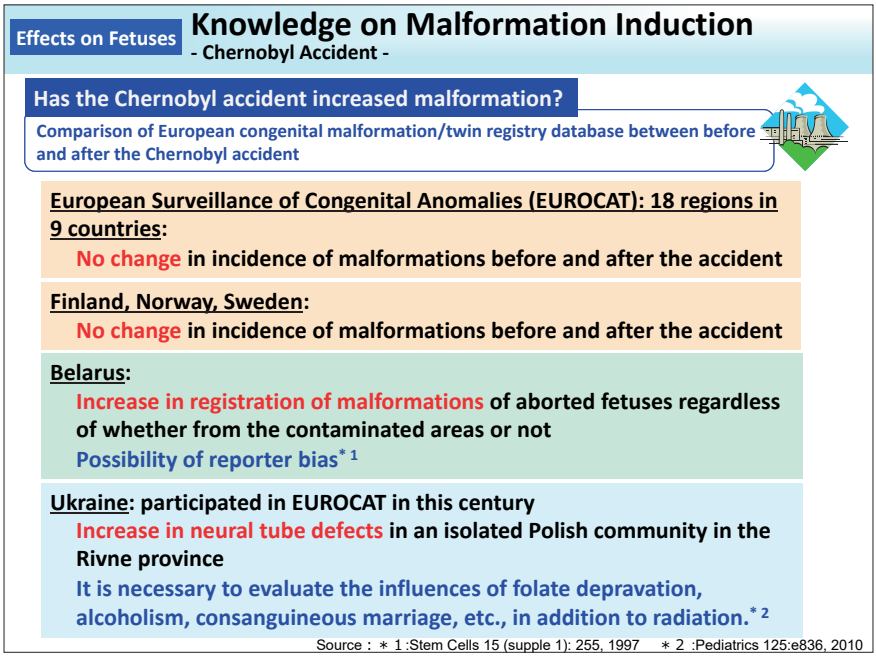

There have been various reports on what impact radiation could have on newly born children and on the incidence of congenital anomalies before and after the Chernobyl accident. Comparison of databases of the European Surveillance of Congenital Anomalies (EUROCAT), and of Finland, Norway, and Sweden showed no change in incidence of malformations.

In the Polissia county in the northern half of the Rivne province of Ukraine, there are people who live a self-sufficient life in a contaminated area. As their name "Polishchuks (forest residents)" suggests, they live off collecting wild strawberries and mushrooms, hunting and fishing in the forests. There is a report that neural tube defects have been increasing among them, and analysis is underway to determine whether it has been caused by radiation.

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