

## HEALTH EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS

by

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The diseases shown on the first slide are the ones which may be associated with exposure to asbestos. First, is the primary one which is asbestosis--a form of fibrosis of the lung. Then there are at least two types, and possibly more, of cancer. There is bronchogenic cancer--a cancer of the bronchial tubes of the lung. This is the common type of cancer associated with exposure to asbestos. Then there is mesothelioma, a rare form of cancer. It is cancer of the pleura and peritoneum. The pleura is the thin membrane which covers the surface of the lung and lines the thoracic cavity. The peritoneum is the same type membrane which lines the abdominal cavity and covers the surface of the organs within the abdomen. In addition, although not listed here, there may be other types of tumors associated with exposure to asbestos since there is an increased incidence of cancer of the gastrointestinal tract in asbestos workers.

(Next Slide) Asbestosis was first described about the turn of this century in London at a post-mortem examination by Dr. Montague Murray. After that, for the next 20 years or so, there were few deaths attributed to asbestosis. However, in the 1930's, asbestos was shown to be a major cause of disability in workers in the asbestos textile industry in England and in the United States. The latent period for this disease is 10 to 20 years. This is the period of time which elapses between the first

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