

FILE NAME: Metropolitan Life (ML)

DATE: 1950

DOC#: ML164

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memo to Dr. Abrams RE Increasing Reports of Dust Related Pneumoconiosis, X-Rays Show Atypical Results - Dr. Lanza Disputes Dangers

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RECEIVED

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF ADULT HEALTH

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Herbert K. Abrams
through Mr. Fred R. Ingram

Date: December 19, 1950

From: Mr. Paul E. Caplan

Subject: Monthly meeting of the Santa Barbara County Hospital Medical Staff

On December 14, 1950, Dr. Nardo, new Health Officer of Santa Barbara County, invited me to the dinner meeting of the above organization. Main speaker of the meeting was Dr. Walter Anderson, who spoke on Pneumoconiosis produced by diatomaceous earth. After his talk he showed chest x-ray slides of many of the employees of Johns-Manville.

Important points that he brought up were (1) 108 disabling cases of pneumoconiosis have been recorded at Lompoc within the past 20 years, with 18 deaths. Many cases of progressive conglomerate lesions have been observed with exposures of 1 to 2 years to the dust. One case was observed after a 7 month exposure.

(2) The conglomerate lesions which are disabling are caused by the processed powders, which change the amorphous silica to cristobalite (60%) and tridymite (2%). The relative toxicity of these two crystals compared to quartz is: quartz 5, tridymite 8, and cristobalite 9.

(3) ~~Inter~~venous inoculation of animals by Gardner with the untreated diatomaceous earth caused fibrosis and death to the animals.

(4) The typical x-ray pictures of this pneumoconiosis are very different from typical silicosis pictures. There is not the typical nodulation but sometimes a pseudonodulation is observed. Instead of the arterial systems being involved, as in the case of silicosis, pneumoconiosis due to diatomaceous earth involves the venous vascular system.

(5) Lanza says that the incidence of T.B. at Lompoc is no higher than at Santa Maria (supposedly a comparable community) but Anderson thinks that the residents at Lompoc are more susceptible.

✓ I was unable to talk with Dr. Anderson after the meeting, but on the previous day, I had made arrangements with Mr. Legge and Mr. Wilson, of Johns-Manville to do a sizeable engineering study there this February.

PEC/ld

Paul E. Caplan
Paul E. Caplan