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CIGARETTES TIED TO CANCER AGAIN

State Report Asserts Weight of Evidence Indicates They Are a Cause of Disease

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

ALBANY, March 14—A report issued by the New York State Department of Health here today said that the weight of existing evidence indicated that cigarette smoking was one of the causes of lung cancer.

The risk rises in direct proportion to the number of cigarettes smoked, it added.

Dr. Morton L. Levin, the Assistant Commissioner for Medical Services, published the report in the current issue of the Journal of the State Medical Society, out tomorrow.

In the report, Dr. Levin reviewed all the medical studies of the relationship between cigarette smoking and lung cancer made to date and compared these with new studies now in progress at Roswell Park Memorial Institute, the state's cancer hospital in Buffalo.

Factor Equalized

In the latter study, factors of age, occupation and place of residence were equalized by statistical means. It was determined that the relative incidence of lung cancer for smokers of twenty or more cigarettes a day was ten times that of nonsmokers.

The study emphasized that the evidence did not show smoking "is the sole causitive factor, or even that it is operative in the absence of other factors" such as susceptibility to atmospheric pollution by industrial wastes, engine exhaust fumes, dust from tarred roads and occupational exposure to cancer-causing dusts or fumes or radiation.

The air of some industrial cities is known to contain benzpyrene and arsenic, two very toxic materials, Dr. Levin said, and mortality rates from lung cancer are higher in cities than in rural areas both in this country and in England and Denmark. However, he added, these factors fail to explain the marked excess incidence of lung cancer among males in both cities and rural areas.

Dr. Levin said that industries and occupations with evidence of abnormally high lung cancer risks are: chromate production, production of illuminating gas, mining of uranium ores (in Europe), nickel refining in South Wales, asbestos manufacturing and metal grinding in England.

A Small Percentage

Some recent evidence suggests that there may be an increased rate of lung cancer among welders and other workers exposed to metal dusts or fumes in this country.

The amount of lung cancer known in these occupations or industries is enough to make up only a relatively small percentage of the total number of cases, he said.

"This conclusion has been further tested by a study of the occupational histories and smoking histories of male lung cancer patients at the Roswell Park Memorial Institute," Dr. Levin went on.

"In this study 137 male lung cancer cases and 396 control cases were matched for age and place of residence, and adjusted for occupation. The excess of cigarette smokers among the lung cancer cases remained after the factors of age, residence and occupation were equalized."

Dr. Levin said that long-range studies now under way were expected to "fully confirm the fact of a substantially increased risk of lung cancer among cigarette smokers."

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