ABSTRACT

Inhalation of asbestos may cause asbestosis, pleural or peritoneal mesothelioma, or lung cancer. Mesothelioma is a rare form of cancer which occurs frequently in asbestos workers. All three of these diseases are fatal once they become established. The dose necessary to produce asbestosis has been estimated to be 50 to 60 million particles per cubic foot-years. No information is available on the dose necessary to induce cancer. Random autopsies of lungs have shown "asbestos bodies" in the lungs of one-fourth to one-half of samples from urban populations. Thus, the apparent air pollution by asbestos reaches a large number of people.

Animals have been shown to develop asbestosis and cancer after exposure to asbestos.

No information has been found on the effects of asbestos air pollution on plants or materials.

The likely sources of asbestos air pollution are uses of the asbestos products in the construction industry and asbestos mines and factories. Observations in Finland and Russia indicate that asbestos does pollute air near mines and factories. However, no measurements were reported of the concentration of asbestos near likely sources in the United States. A concentration in urban air of 600 to 6,000 particles per cubic meter has been estimated.

Bag filters have been used in factories to control

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