

PULMONARY ASBESTOSIS

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emaciated. His chief complaints were pains in the right side of the "stomach," right side of the back and shoulder, and shortness of breath.

History: Prior to 1931 the patient's health was good and practically no time was lost from work as a result of illness, although for five years he had noticed some shortness of breath. He had had influenza in 1918, but except for that had always been well. In 1931 he lost three days from work on account of sharp pains in his back, extending down over the three lower ribs. Nine months later intermittent sharp shooting pains occurred involving his right shoulder. These lasted about ten days. Except for the shortness of breath, there were no further symptoms until Nov. 7, 1933, when there were renewed attacks of pain involving the right shoulder, axilla, and the three lower ribs on the same side. The pain occurred about every hour and lasted about thirty minutes. It seemed to be more severe during the night. The patient also became quite weak and seemed to lose weight. He was now compelled to quit work and seek medical aid. During November and December, under medical care, he grew weaker and lost more weight, his dyspnea was aggravated, and a cough, productive of wiry, white mucoid sputum developed. On Jan. 8, during a spell of coughing, he expectorated fresh blood mixed with mucoid material.

The family history was not significant.

Occupational History: The first exposure to a dusty atmosphere occurred when the patient was about sixteen, when he began to work in a cotton mill as a weaver. He first worked in a place with open doors and windows, and later a humidifying system was installed; he did not consider the atmosphere excessively dust laden. He continued work as a weaver in various cotton mills until 1913, when he obtained a job as a weaver at an asbestos factory, which he held until just prior to hospital admission. During times when his work there was suspended he did odd jobs, with apparently no occupational hazards. Beginning in 1913, he worked in an extremely dusty atmosphere, in spite of the fact that windows and doors were kept open as much as possible. About 1923 a humidifying system was installed, but this he considered very inefficient, though it improved the atmosphere somewhat. In winter the heating system kept the air in the plant too dry to allow settling of dusty particles. In summer, when all doors were kept open, air from the forced draft from the "preparation room," emptying outside the plant, entered the room in which the patient worked. The last five or six months of his employment he was at "wet work" instead of dry weaving, reducing the exposure to dust. He was accustomed to work overtime, since he was paid by the yard.

This man, then, worked as a cotton mill weaver for approximately twenty-two years and as an asbestos mill weaver for some twenty-one years, which may account for certain features of silicosis in the lungs, in addition to those of asbestosis.

Course: Throughout his stay in the hospital the patient continued to complain of persistent pain along the right costal border and right

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