

20 to 100 μ in length. The coating contains iron demonstrable by Perle's stain (Prussian blue reaction), and probably composed of ferritin or ferritin-like material; it may cover the structure completely, masking the central fiber from direct view, or may be incomplete in the central portion of the shaft or in the interstices of the body, revealing an expanse of naked fiber.²²⁰

There is no doubt that the "asbestos bodies" formed in the lungs of the asbestos workers contain asbestos. Stumphius and Meyer²¹⁰ have investigated the composition of the "kernel" in the "asbestos bodies" removed from deceased shipyard workers (an occupational group with only indirect exposure). They found by electron microscopy and X-ray microanalyses that the "asbestos bodies" did indeed contain some minerals of asbestos. Out of 27 fibers, 17 were classified as serpentine (possibly chrysotile) and 10 as amphibole (possibly crocidolite). But what about the so-called "asbestos bodies" in the lungs of the general population? While these "asbestos bodies" probably contain some asbestos, there is no experimental evidence to date which shows what fractions contain asbestos or whether they contain any asbestos at all.^{79,194} This subject is currently being debated by several investigators.^{53,79,209} In fact, some object to the use of the term "asbestos bodies" and prefer to call them "ferruginous bodies." Moreover, Gross et al.⁷⁹ have shown that "ferruginous bodies"—which appear identical under the microscope to those formed from asbestos—

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