

ASBESTOSIS—PART III.—The Effects of Exposure to Dust Encountered in Asbestos Fabricating Plants on the Health of a Group of Workers.

Complete physical examinations were made of sixty-four persons (48 men, 16 women) employed at the time in the plants listed in Part II of this report. Of this number seven men without previous exposure were used as controls. Selection of the workers was restricted to those employed in textile manufacture. Those workers longest employed were chosen because the necessity of including a sufficient number from this group is evident. Attention was also paid to the group with exposures of shorter duration and to the particular operation at which the worker was employed. Table VIII shows their age distribution.

TABLE VIII. DISTRIBUTION BY AGE OF ALL PERSONS EXAMINED

Group	Number of Persons Examined	Number in Age Group				
		Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and over
Controls	7	1	2	--	1	3
Asbestosis	14	--	7	6	--	1
Negative	43	15	12	11	3	2
Totals	64	16	21	17	4	6

Asbestosis was found in fourteen persons (12 men, 2 women), or 25 per cent of the exposed group. Forty persons were diagnosed as negative and the remaining three doubtful. Of the latter group, one individual had previous exposure to silica dust which may have been the primary or contributing cause and, as a result, has been eliminated from any further consideration. The cases having asbestosis were divided into those having slight and moderate pulmonary fibrosis, no advanced cases having been found. The estimation of the degree of involvement depended on the amount and extent of fibrosis seen roentgenologically and in the clinical findings.

The present, past, and family medical, and previous occupational histories were secured from each worker. Direct questions, which might influence the individual's replies in regard to his subjective symptoms, were avoided in obtaining chief complaints. The predominating subjective symptoms in the positive group were cough and dyspnea. Other major subjective symptoms were dry throat and frequent colds. One individual in this group had no subjective symptoms.