

ASBESTOSIS

115

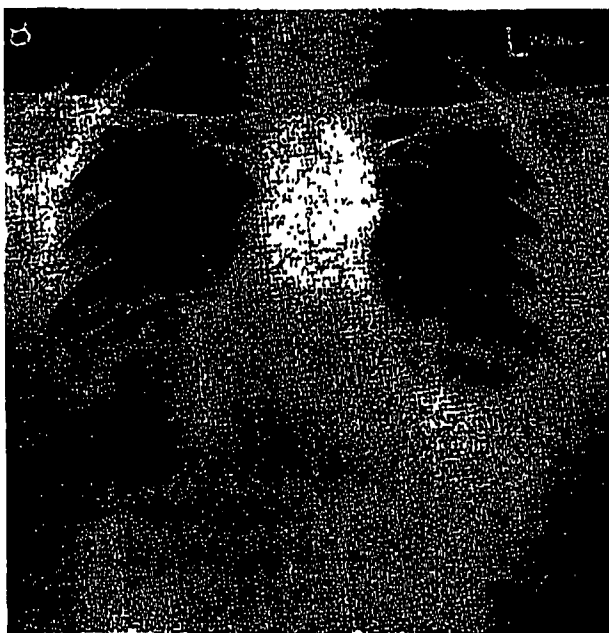


FIG 23.—Male aged 49 years (1953). 1926–38, asbestos millboard cutter; 1938–43, timekeeper and gatekeeper; 1943 *et seq.*, despatch clerk. Typical radiographic appearances of advanced asbestosis; clubbing of fingers (see Fig. 13). At present working regularly. (By courtesy of Dr. H. Wyers.)

of the fingers and sometimes of the toes. Out of Wyers' series of 53 consecutive cases, clubbing of the fingers was present in 29 cases (Wyers, 1949).

Complications of asbestosis.—Pulmonary tuberculosis occurs as a complication, but there does not seem to be the same close relationship to asbestosis as exists in silicosis. An excess mortality from cancer of the lung and other organs has been recorded by several observers. Wyers, the medical officer to a large asbestos manufacturing company, stated in 1949 (see Table V) that he had collected details of 115 deaths from asbestosis, and that of these cases 11 males and 6 females showed pulmonary cancer, whilst cancer of other organs was present in 3 males and 4 females (in the pancreas, colon, stomach and ovary). Despite the frequency of clubbing of the fingers, frank infective bronchiectasis is unusual. Congestive heart failure and bronchopneumonia are common terminal conditions.

Radiological appearances in asbestosis

Often the first fact which impresses the reader is the smallness of the chest, as if the lungs were shrunken from apex to base. The next feature is a general haziness of the lung fields; this has been described as veiling or a

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