

DHC

Asbestos Fibers Now Held General Population Hazard

BY ARTHUR J. SNIDER

1975, Chicago Daily News

Chicago — Asbestos fibers, previously identified as a hazard to industrial workers, are beginning to produce lung tissue changes in the general population, according to medical scientists.

They reported finding lung changes in 10 men who were being routinely chest X-rayed. The men, all Navy personnel, had no occupational exposure to asbestos.

Dr. Charles W. Ochs and Dr. John P. Smith, medical officers at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland, estimated that the majority of the male population over 30 probably have asbestos fibers in their lungs and 5 per cent probably have tissue changes as a result.

So far the condition is benign, Ochs told the Radiological Society of North America, but added that there is a possibility the changes could lead to cancer in some individuals.

Growing exposure to asbestos in the environment is probably responsible for the new hazard, said Ochs.

Asbestos is used in cardboard, tiles, gutters, drain pipes, electrical insulation, pipe covering and a wide variety of other building materials. Vinyl asbestos floor tile also may be a significant source of airborne fibers.

"The major source of environmental asbestos, however, results from the automobile," said Ochs. "Brake linings, clutches, mufflers and transmission give off fibers."

He estimated that 2.5 million tons of asbestos is thrown into the atmosphere in a year.

Ochs believes it has taken 20 to 30 years for the asbestos to build up in the lungs to the point where it is being seen in routine X rays.

It should be much more prevalent in the next 20 years with continuous and increasing exposure, he added.

The inhaled fibers accumulate in the pleura of lining of the lungs and cause a thickening.

Can be seen after
about 10 yrs probably -
+ a very little exposure - he.

2-3 months

Saturday, December 6, 1975

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Section 1

Dr. J. 741

Thought you might be
interested in this article.
I happened to be talking to
Dr. Smith while the two
reporters were interviewing
Dr. Ochs.

A very poor exhibit -
but claiming presence of ferruginous
bodies indicative of possible
asbestosis because of insulation
used in -

Am certain this particular problem
was chosen for the news media
to enlarge on because of NIOSH etc.
+ I was totally unimpressed in
this particular exhibit.

Like so many other areas -

Too much Politics!

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