

deaths among asbestos insulation workers, 53 were found to have carcinomas of the lung, 9 had mesotheliomas of the pleura, 35 had carcinomas of the gastrointestinal tract, and 27 had neoplasms at other sites; 17 of them had asbestosis confirmed at autopsy. The conclusion of this paper was that pulmonary asbestosis was a significant risk of insulation workers in the United States; and it will be noted from the above figures that this paper touched upon the point developed later by other workers at the Mt. Sinai Hospital that the risk of carcinoma, either of the respiratory tract or of the gastrointestinal tract, appears to be significantly greater amongst the insulation workers than amongst the general population.

At a later session E. C. Hammond of the Mt. Sinai Hospital group further underlined the unusual occurrence of carcinomata amongst the insulation workers. First of all he noted that in a prospective study of 255 consecutive deaths amongst this group of insulation workers carried out over the years 1943-1962 that the total number of deaths were increased (observed 255, expected 204) as were deaths caused by cancer of lung and pleura (observed 45, expected 7), and stomach and colon (observed 29, expected 10). Dr. Hammond then updated his information to include a total of 307 consecutive deaths from January 1, 1943, to August 30, 1964. This updating of his statistics did not materially affect the standings but did serve to underline the fact that deaths due to intra-abdominal neoplasms were also greatly increased over what might have been expected if the death rates of the general population had prevailed. Dr. Hammond pointed out that for a variety of reasons the accuracy of diagnoses of gastrointestinal tract neoplasms is often insecure. In two-fifths of the 49 such deaths, analysis of all of the available data showed the diagnosis to be presumptive only. This was especially true of stomach cancer (8 out of 13) and generalized abdominal cancer (6 of 7). Therefore it is possible that peritoneal mesothelioma may be even more common than the 5 out of 307 deaths recorded. In addition to the neoplasia amongst the recorded deaths, there were three men alive with known neoplasms (1 lung cancer, 1 pleural, and 1 peritoneal mesothelioma), as well as one apparently cured of tongue cancer, one of cancer of the colon, and three following successful resection of localized lung cancer found in this survey. In questions at the end of this paper, Dr. Hammond brought out that the group of workers had presumably not been more intensively studied from the pathological point of view than any other similar group of workers in another industry since until the publication of the results there had not been any particular cause for concern that the asbestos insulation workers were showing an abnormal incidence of neoplasia.