FILE NAME: Talc (TALC)

DATE: 1972 Aug 3

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to J&J research lab from Barry Castleman

BC Notes: 1972 BC letter to J&J cites Kleinfeld (1967) and Henderson (1971) papers, accepts as "apparent that Johnson's talc is free of asbestos"

Barry Castleman Comments - 1972 BC letter to J&J cites Kleinfeld (1967) and Henderson (1971) papers, accepts as "apparent that Johnson's talc is free of asbestos"

Plaintiff Exhibit
PL EXH 1104

305 West Biddle Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
August 3, 1972

Dr. Thomas H. Shelley
Director
Central Research Laboratories
Johnson and Johnson
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dear Dr. Shelley:

When I was doing research on asbestos at Johns Hopkins I asked you some questions about Johnson's talc, and you sent a very informative reply. It is apparent that Johnson's talc is free of asbestos.

What I am interested in knowing is whether talc per se can enhance likelihood of cancer development, in individuals who are occupationally exposed. Kleinfeld's study of talc miners revealed a fourfold excess of lung cancer; however, the tremolite and anthrophyllite (asbestos) content of the dust these men breathed was about 30%, so there is considerable doubt as to whether

it was the talc or the asbestos (these varieties of asbestos are of little commercial value, consequently there is hardly anything in the literature about the cancer experience of workers so exposed) which was the cause. Kleinfeld knows of no other studies of talc workers, to date.

Dr. Shelley, what is needed are records of at least 100 men who have had occupational exposure to talc which commenced at least 20 years ago. The study would consist of following up to see which of them have died, and of what causes. Can you help me to locate a study group, either from your company's records or from union records?

It would be of great value to provide a scientific basis for saying whether talc exposure carries any excess risk of developing cancer. Reports of talc particles in ovarian tumor tissue (J. Obstet. Gynecol. 78, 266, 1971) and excess lung cancer among workers with mixed talc/asbestos exposure are cause for concern, but they provide no proof of talc hazard.

Sincerely,

Barry I Castleman