

It is desirable that National Statistical Agencies and Bodies apply the WHO International Classification of Diseases to distinguish between

1. Primary pulmonary and pleural malignant neoplasms, and
2. Primary peritoneal malignant neoplasms.

Certain selective processes operate through the above sources so that the number of cases will not necessarily be the same, and the use of all sources is likely to ensure the most complete cover, both of these believed to be occupationally linked and those in which the occupation was not thought to be involved or in which no adequate investigation of the occupation was made.

In addition an examination of the fibre content of the lung should be performed wherever possible.

Reports through pathologists and clinicians will include both occupational and non-occupational cases. In view of the high and rapid mortality of these cases, the majority will be detected by pathologists or clinicians and appear in official statistics, but there may be exceptions. The reports through the pathologists and clinicians have the advantage that they may provide a means for detailed investigation of the occupational histories while the individual is alive, and this could be of considerable help in improving the information about associated occupations and jobs.

It is a wellknown fact that the diagnostic criteria for mesothelioma, as given above have not always been adhered to, particularly in older studies, and the conclusions sometimes may have to be enweakened.

In 1971 Wagner et al reviewed the evidence available at that time. Their review is summarized as follows:

- Nearly all cases of mesothelioma (pleura and/or peritoneum) in Britain appear to be of occupational origin and not the result of contamination of the general environment. In about 10-15% of cases where information on past history has been complete, no history of asbestos exposure has been recorded and few or no asbestos bodies have been detected in the lung.
- In Britain mesotheliomas particularly occur in towns and in cities with factories where asbestos has been handled in large amounts in the past.
- Exposure to crocidolite apparently carries the greatest risks. Exposure to pure chrysotile or to anthophyllite provides hardly any risk; in the

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