

The present study, in contrast to the earlier works, has been planned to utilize the epidemiological method. A well-defined group of asbestos miners has been established in such a way that it constitutes a good sample of the whole population of asbestos miners in Quebec. Data for all members of this group have been collected and analyzed. Those concerning lung cancer have received most careful consideration. Details of the methods employed will be set forth later, but the type of approach is considered to permit of fair comparisons and valid generalizations.

Collection and Analysis of Data

A preliminary survey of potential sources of information in February of 1956 involved discussions with the physicians in charge of the asbestos companies' programs and with clinicians, pathologists, representatives of City and Provincial health departments and of the Canadian Cancer Society, and other interested persons. It was found that morbidity data, although somewhat limited, were available from such sources as the hospitals in Montreal and Quebec City, and the 13 Cancer Detection Centers in the Province. However, because of the high mortality in lung cancer, it seemed advisable to depend upon data relating to deaths. These we found to be obtainable at the vital statistics department of the Ministry of Health in Quebec City. From the preliminary survey, it was apparent that extensive and detailed information could be gathered with respect to both the persons employed in the asbestos mining industry and mortality figures for the general population.