

ASBESTOS RELATED DISEASES

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Until the early 1950's asbestos was thought to be an inert material which did not cause any problem; although asbestosis was first described in 1906 in England and in 1930 in the U.S. and an association between asbestos exposure and lung cancer was noted as early as 1935, the fact that asbestos exposure could result in serious health problems was not widely accepted until much later.

It should be noted that large scale use of asbestos did not start until close to the end of the last century. This is important since in most cases diseases resulting from exposure to asbestos do not become evident until many years after the exposure begins, in some cases up to 40 years.

There are three disease entities which result from exposure to asbestos.

1. Asbestosis
2. Mesothelioma
3. Cancer of the lung and other sites