

# ABOUT ASBESTOS-RELATED DISEASES

## WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

- Naturally occurring fibrous mineral that is a recognized **carcinogen**
- Once valued as a **fire and chemical resistant material**, it was widely used in the construction, automotive, military, marine, and manufacturing industries
- When it is cut or crushed, the **fibers can be inhaled or ingested**
- **Asbestos exposure increases risk for developing disease of the lungs, chest cavity, and abdomen**



Asbestos fibers are:

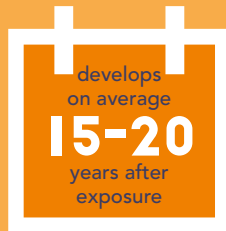
**INVISIBLE**

**ODORLESS**

**TASTELESS**

## PLEURAL PLAQUES:

Pleural plaques are the most common condition that results from asbestos exposure. They are **benign patches of fibrous thickening on the pleura (lining of the lungs), which can eventually calcify.**



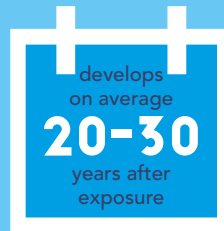
Pleural plaques do not generally produce notable symptoms.

They are diagnosed using a chest x-ray or CT scan.

Though pleural plaques do not progress into lung cancer or mesothelioma, individuals with this diagnosis are at higher risk for later developing cancers related to asbestos.

## ASBESTOSIS:

Asbestosis is a chronic respiratory disease caused by **prolonged exposure to asbestos.** The inhaled fibers can lodge deep in the lungs, leading to **fibrosis (scarring) and stiffness of the lungs.**



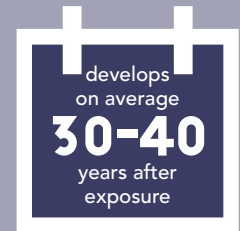
The most common symptoms are **shortness of breath and a persistent, dry cough.**

It is diagnosed through a physical exam, chest x-ray, and lung function tests.

Though asbestosis does not progress into lung cancer or mesothelioma, individuals with this diagnosis are at higher risk for later developing cancers related to asbestos.

## LUNG CANCER:

Asbestos-caused lung cancer **originates in the lung itself.** It is comprised of different cancer cells than those associated with pleural mesothelioma, and thus is a completely separate cancer.



In general, the greater the exposure to asbestos, the higher the risk of lung cancer. **The risk is also much higher among asbestos-exposed smokers.**

The most common symptoms are **chest pain, coughing, difficulty breathing, fatigue, and weight loss.**

It is diagnosed by a pathologist through a biopsy.



If you have a member that has been diagnosed with an asbestos disease, O'Brien Law Firm will provide them a full case evaluation at no cost or obligation. Contact us today.

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