

Title:

Symptoms of Mesothelioma – Know more; suffer less

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Summary:

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Article Body:

What is Mesothelioma?

Mesothelioma can be defined as a rare form of cancer that affects mesothelium, the protective sac that covers most of the internal organs of the body. In this disease, the cells of the mesothelium become abnormal and they start dividing randomly. Mostly, the preliminary attack of Mesothelioma takes place in pleura or peritoneum and it is seen that majority of the Mesothelioma patients have a history of exposure to asbestos.

Mesothelioma’s nexus with asbestos

Mesothelioma is a relatively rare form of cancer with a rate of about 2000 new cases per year in the US. Though there is no specific age or sex for Mesothelioma, aged men seem to be more prone to catch the disease. As 70% to 80% of the case histories of patients reveal, Mesothelioma has a strong connection with asbestos exposure.

Asbestos is a group of minerals, which occur naturally as masses of strong, flexible fibers. It is required in several industries namely cement, flooring products, textiles, etc. When the tiny particles of asbestos are inhaled or swallowed, they pose severe health related threats like increased risk of lung cancer, asbestosis, mesothelioma, etc. The combination of asbestos exposure and smoking habit often aggravates the risk.

Symptoms of Mesothelioma

One peculiarity of Mesothelioma is that it has a long latency period of about

15-50 years, which means that the symptoms of the disease may start appearing 30 to 50 years after exposure to asbestos. Moreover, Mesothelioma symptoms are often not specific i.e. they are same in case of several other diseases. This is why Mesothelioma tests are very important to dispel the incidence of the disease if relevant symptoms crop up.

Speaking of symptoms, there are three prominent symptoms of Mesothelioma that cannot be overlooked. These involve pain while breathing or coughing, gasping for breath and a persistent cough that may result in sputum streaked with blood. Besides, exhaustion, weight loss and appetite loss are some of the other contributing symptoms. Other very rare symptoms are hoarse voice, swelling of the face or the neck, problem in swallowing and pain around the rib area.

However, depending upon the location of the cancerous tumors (pleura or peritoneum) the symptoms vary in case of pleural and peritoneal Mesothelioma. In pleural Mesothelioma, the fluid gets accumulated in the pleura and leads to shortness of breath, persistent coughing, pain in the chest, difficulty in sleeping, pain in the lower back and side of chest, husky voice, nausea, difficulty in swallowing and fever.

Cancer in the lining of the abdomen is what we know as peritoneal Mesothelioma. Because of the fluid retention in the abdominal cavity there is a subsequent abdominal pain and swelling.

Noticeable symptoms of peritoneal Mesothelioma are listed as follows:

- Weight loss
- Abdominal pain
- Build up of fluid in the abdomen
- Bowel obstruction
- Abnormal blood clotting
- Abdominal mass and fever

Mesothelioma's treatment depends upon several factors like location of the cancer, stage of the disease, patient's age and general health. Standard treatments that are carried out to cure the disease include surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy. Sometimes, these treatments are combined to achieve better results.

Thus it is worthwhile to mention, as all doctors say that to fight a disease we need to find the symptoms first. So be aware of the symptoms of Mesothelioma and consult the doctor at the very onset for an immediate treatment.