

Title:

Mesothelioma - The 3 Main Types

Word Count:

421

Summary:

In general, mesothelioma is a rare form of cancer. Different types of mesothelioma are distinguished between by where the cancer is growing. Pleural mesothelioma, the most common, accounting for 75% of all mesothelioma cases, is where cancerous cells develop on the lining of the lungs.

Keywords:

mesothelioma, cancer, asbestos, pericardial, peritoneal, pleural, malignant, symptoms, treatment

Article Body:

In general, mesothelioma is a rare form of cancer. Different types of mesothelioma are distinguished between by where the cancer is growing. Pleural mesothelioma, the most common, accounting for 75% of all mesothelioma cases, is where cancerous cells develop on the lining of the lungs. The next most common form of mesothelioma is peritoneal mesothelioma and this is where cancerous cells grow on the peritoneum which is the lining of the abdomen. Pericardial mesothelioma, the least common major form of mesothelioma, makes up roughly 5% of all mesothelioma cases. This is where malignant cancer cells grow on the lining of the heart.

All three of these forms of mesothelioma are caused by asbestos. Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that was discovered around the 1860s. Due to its highly useful property of being fireproof, asbestos was used greatly in construction in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. It was not until the early 1960s when the severe health hazards that asbestos causes were discovered, that asbestos stopped being used. When exposed to asbestos with insufficient protection a person will breathe in tiny asbestos fibres which are suspended in the air. These fibres pass into the respiratory system until they become lodged in the lining of the lungs. Over time, an accumulation of these asbestos fibres in the lungs can cause pleural mesothelioma. Asbestos fibres may also pass into the lymphatic system and be transported to either the lining of the abdomen or the tissue surrounding the heart. This may cause either peritoneal mesothelioma or pericardial mesothelioma.

In terms of symptoms, the three main types of mesothelioma have some symptoms in

common with each other. These symptoms are usual of all three types: chest pain, shortness of breath, coughing, coughing up blood, vomiting, nausea, weight loss and loss of appetite. An additional symptom of pericardial mesothelioma is palpitations.

There are a few treatments for all types of mesothelioma but none of these have a high success rate. The effectiveness of the treatment depends on how early and how aggressively the cancer is treated. If the cancerous cells are treated when they have fully matured and developed then it is unlikely that treatment methods will be successful. Treatment methods include chemotherapy which is the use of drugs to kill the cancer, radiation therapy which uses a radiation dosage to kill off cancerous cells and surgery which attempts to gain long term control over the cancer by removing a large portion of malignant cells. These treatment methods can be combined in the form of dual therapy.