



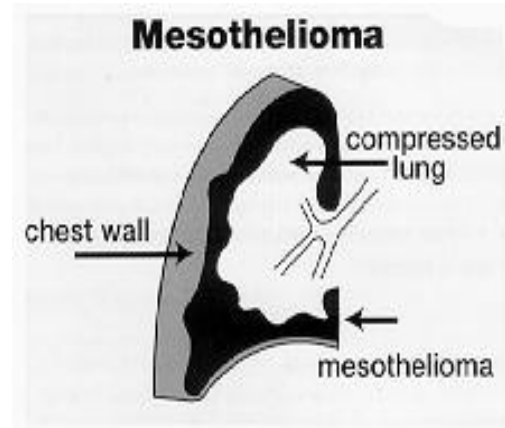
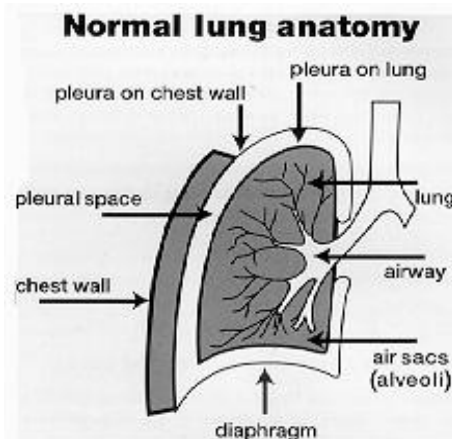
MESOTHELIOMA

Another painful outcome of asbestosis

What is Mesothelioma?

Since the tragic death of Bernie Banton in 2007 from Mesothelioma, the CFMEU has decided to find out more information about this dreadful disease, which is yet another disease borne out of asbestosis.

Mesothelioma is a rare form of cancer of the lining of the lung (pleura) or the lining of the abdominal cavity (peritoneum). The National Cancer Institute states that: "*Malignant Mesothelioma, a rare form of cancer, is a disease in which cancer (malignant) cells are found in the sac lining the chest (the pleura), the lining of the abdominal cavity (the peritoneum) or the lining around the heart (the pericardium).*"



Causes

Mesothelioma is caused by asbestos exposure. The majority of people that have Mesothelioma have worked on jobs where they have breathed asbestos. Others have been exposed to asbestos in a household environment, doing something as little as washing a family member's garments that had been exposed to asbestos, often without knowing it. Exposure to asbestos for two to three months can result in Mesothelioma.

Symptoms

The symptoms of Mesothelioma may not occur at least 20 to 50 years after exposure to asbestos. *Shortness of breath, coughing and pain in the chest due to an accumulation of fluid in the pleural space* are often symptoms of pleural Mesothelioma.

Symptoms of peritoneal Mesothelioma include weight loss and cachexia, abdominal swelling and pain due to ascites (a buildup of fluid in the abdominal cavity). Other symptoms of peritoneal Mesothelioma may include bowel obstruction, blood clotting abnormalities, anemia and fever. If the cancer has spread beyond the Mesothelium to other parts of the body, symptoms may include pain, trouble swallowing or swelling of the neck and face.

Diagnosis

Diagnosing Mesothelioma is often very difficult hence the symptoms are similar to a number of other conditions that are not as serious.

Diagnosis begins with a review of the patient's medical history. A history of exposure to asbestos may increase clinical suspicion for Mesothelioma. The diagnosis of Mesothelioma is most frequently obtained with careful assessment of clinical and radiological findings in addition to a confirming tissue biopsy.

Treatment

There are three traditional kinds of treatment for patients with Mesothelioma:

- Surgery (taking out the cancer)
- Chemotherapy (using drugs to fight the cancer)
- Radiation Therapy (using high-dose x-rays or other high-energy rays to kill cancer cells)

For more information on Mesothelioma

Go to the Mesothelioma website – www.mesotheliomaweb.org. This is one of the most established and comprehensive sites on Mesothelioma in the world, providing facts about palliative care, nutrition, and chemotherapy, as well as information on clinical trials.

The Mesothelioma website is constantly adding new information and articles, including international news, so the information is always up-to-date.

At www.mesotheliomaweb.org, visitors can sign up to receive a free information packet on asbestos exposure.

There is also a phone number available for them to call, where they can talk to a real person to find out more about asbestos-related diseases.