

The Pain of Mesothelioma

(Posted by Tom Lamb at www.AsbestosHUB.com on July 26, 2009; see <http://bit.ly/5KWmB>)

The July 20, 2009 edition of the *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health*, reports that Scientists at the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute's National Center for Vermiculite and Asbestos-Related Cancers (NCVAC) why mesothelioma hurts so bad.

The findings were published in an academic peer-reviewed manuscript by principal author Michael Harbut, M.D., MPH, co-director of the NCVAC and chief of the Center for Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

Using a new radiography approach, Harbut reported a documented increase in pleural plaques, causing erosion on the interior wall of the ribs in a patient who was exposed to taconite dust as a child.

"This action of the pleural plaque against the covering of the bone and the bone itself is a biologically plausible and an anatomically logical explanation of the unrelenting pain which some patients experience," said Dr. Harbut.

The patient, age 55, has been under observation since 2004. She was exposed to taconite as a child when her father, a taconite miner, brought home the taconite dust on his work clothes. Taconite is used in the production of steel and road-patching material.

The patient experienced pain on her right side for the past 31 years, a persistent cough and wheezing. Her pain gradually increased and Dr. Harbut was able to show the progression of the patient's pleural plaque over a three year period, from 2005 - 2008. These findings also support earlier human and animal reports that dusts produced by taconite mining can evoke the same biological responses as do other fibers already defined as asbestos or asbestiform materials.

Harbut hopes that with this new imaging technology, more selective pain management approaches with fewer side effects can be instituted resulting in a better quality of life.

Finally, the report supports the identification of taconite, which has not yet been categorized as asbestos but causes a disease consistent with asbestosis, and recommends a reevaluation of the definition of asbestos.

Attorney Tom Lamb represents people in personal injury and wrongful death cases involving mesothelioma or other asbestos cancers. The above article was posted originally on his blog, **Asbestos HUB** – with active links and readers' comments.
<http://AsbestosHUB.com>