

Colorectal (Colon) Cancer and Asbestos Exposure

Colon cancer, which affects the large intestine or rectum, is among the leading cancer-related deaths in the United States. Research shows that long-term exposure to asbestos may result in an increased risk for the development of colon cancer; thus, workers who were exposed to asbestos while on the job and who have developed colon cancer may be eligible for financial compensation.

Unlike mesothelioma, a direct cause and effect relationship between asbestos and colon cancer has not been established. But, some researchers say there are signs of a possible link. For example, a major study conducted between 1984 and 2004, which evaluated occupational exposure to asbestos, showed an increase risk for colon cancer in men who were exposed to asbestos while at work. Another older study involving insulation workers who started in the industry before 1943 also showed that the workers who were exposed to asbestos were at a higher risk of developing colon cancer.

Research from other studies show conflicting data, however. For example, according to a 1994 report published in International Archives of Occupational and Environment Health, there is no evidence of a causal relationship between asbestos exposure and colon cancer. Researchers involved in the study evaluated 261 cases of colon and rectal cancer and 183 control cases in Southeast Michigan and concluded that there isn't enough data to support a causal relationship.

So, the verdict is still out on whether asbestos actually causes colon cancer. But, what we do know is that asbestos exposure does cause various types of cancers and, according to some research, it may increase the risk for colon cancer. So, we believe it is in the best interest of people who have been diagnosed with colon cancer and who have a history of asbestos exposure to seek legal help to determine whether they qualify for financial compensation and support.

Colon Cancer Basics

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the tissues of the colon and/or rectum. The colon (which absorbs food and water and stores water) and the rectum (which passes waste from the body) form what is known as the large intestine. Colorectal cancer starts in the inner lining of the colon and/or rectum and slowly grows through all of the layers. It is called colon cancer when it affects the colon and rectal cancer when it affects the rectum.

Symptoms of Colon Cancer

Persons with colon cancer typically experience two types of symptoms: local and systematic. Local symptoms directly affect the colon and may include:

- Changes in bowel movements

- Constipation

Diarrhea

Rectal bleeding

Bloody stool

Cramping, bloating or discomfort in the abdomen

A feeling that the bowel doesn't empty completely

Thin stools

Systematic symptoms affect other areas of the body, and can include:

Unexplained weight loss

Loss of appetite

Nausea or vomiting

Anemia

Jaundice

Unexplained fatigue/weakness

Other Risk Factors

Other risk factors for colon cancer include:

Age – persons 50 or older are at a higher risk for colon cancer

Weight – persons who are overweight have an increased risk for developing colon cancer

Ethnicity – African Americans and Ashkenazi Jews have the highest incidence of this cancer

Genetics – inherited genes may increase the risk

Diet – persons that consume large quantities of red or processed meats have a higher risk of developing the cancer

Inactive lifestyle – persons with low physical activity tend to be at an increased risk for the disease

Smoking/alcohol consumption – smoking and/or heavy alcohol consumption have been proven risk factors for the disease

History of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) – persons with IBD (ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s Disease) have a higher chance of developing colon cancer

Type II Diabetes – persons with type II diabetes also have a higher risk of developing the disease

Seeking Help for Colon Cancer Patients

If you or someone you love is diagnosed with colon cancer and you have a history of asbestos exposure, you may qualify for legal help and financial assistance. An asbestos lawyer may be able to help you get financial compensation to pay for expensive medical bills and secure the financial future of your family. Our team of lawyers not only help patients and their families secure financial compensation, they also help patients seek out the top medical professionals to ensure the highest quality of life.

For more information about colon cancer and asbestos exposure or to speak with someone about getting help for you or a family member, contact MesotheliomaTreatmentCenters.org.