

Asbestos may create serious health hazards such as coughing, lung damage, shortness of breath, and lung cancer. Most people do not become sick in the early stages of development, but usually need continued exposure, often on jobs such as mining, milling, manufacturing asbestos products, and building construction. Firemen, demolition workers, drywall removers, and any other workers in trades that involve destruction of buildings, ships, and automobiles are also exposed to the hazards and risks of asbestos. Over a period of years continual exposure to asbestos can cause very serious health problems, such as mesothelioma.

Mesothelioma is a rare type of carcinoma of the membrane that lines numerous cavities of the body, including the lungs, abdomen and heart, and has been associated with exposure to asbestos dust. In mesothelioma, the cells of the mesothelioma metastasize and damage adjacent organs and tissues. Risk of developing mesothelioma takes a long period of time, often as long as twenty or forty years before full blown symptoms appear. Not all workers who have been exposed will develop diseases caused by asbestos, but workers who have been exposed to it may bring fibers on their clothing, hair, shoes, and skin home to their families. To circumvent this risk, most industries require workers to bathe and change their clothing before they leave work. Many studies have been conducted involving the risks of diseases caused by exposure to asbestos. The results of one such study involving the risks of smoking and exposure to asbestos proved extremely hazardous.