



Pleural thickening

Bringing a claim

Pleural thickening is a lung disease in which extensive scarring thickens the pleural membrane (the thin lining that surrounds the lungs and the chest wall) and is often caused by asbestos exposure. As the scar tissue gets thicker, it can prevent the lung from expanding and makes breathing more difficult.

The condition most commonly takes 15 to 20 years before doctors make a diagnosis. It may develop after limited exposure to asbestos.

As the disease progresses, patients may experience chest discomfort and breathlessness. The damage is irreversible and therapies to treat the disease's symptoms include pulmonary rehabilitation, steroids and oxygen and occasionally surgery or draining any residual fluid from the lungs.

Pleural thickening may remain stable, but due to their past exposure to asbestos, sufferers may be at an increased risk of developing mesothelioma, an asbestos related cancer of the lung.

Legal issues

How to claim

Compensation is generally available under the normal injury claim rules. This means that a claim can be brought up to three years from the date of knowledge of the issue, which in most cases is when the sufferer was told about the condition (diagnosed).

In order to bring a claim, it is important to know when and how the asbestos exposure took place. It is also important to be able to identify which employers were at fault. There are various ways of tracking down former employers (and their insurers if they have gone out of business) but the more information available at the outset, the easier it is to make a claim.

Information such as:

- any correspondence from previous employers (including wage slips, pension documents, Contracts of Employment, Apprentice indentures etc)
- contact details of former colleagues with whom you worked alongside, who may be able to confirm the circumstances of asbestos exposure
- a diagnosis letter from your consultant.

will be very valuable.

Current claims and client testimonials

Current claims

A £50,000 interim payment was secured for Mrs D who had been diagnosed with mesothelioma, after washing her husband's asbestos contaminated overalls. The Royal Courts of Justice in London ordered the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham to pay an interim payment of £50,000 to Mrs D, with damages to be assessed at a later date.

Mr J, a carpenter, was diagnosed with mesothelioma aged 60. An early letter of claim to his former employer resulted in an interim payment of £50,000. An admission of liability was secured within four months of instruction. Mr J has since passed away but the claim is now continuing on behalf of his estate.

A claim was brought by Mr B after he was exposed to asbestos whilst employed as a technician at a college in Hertfordshire between 1982 and 1992. A witness appeal brought forward several of Mr B's former colleagues. Supportive witness evidence by former colleagues helped secure an admission of liability.

Client testimonials

"I have been hugely impressed by the service we have received from Ashtons and more particularly from you personally and your colleagues. We have remarked several times that we could not have found a better person to handle our case due to your friendly and caring approach in what was a difficult and quite scary episode. Your determination to achieve a good result will always be appreciated and I would certainly not hesitate to look to Ashtons if I needed specialist legal assistance."

Phoebe Osborne

"Thank you so much for helping me, I could not have done it without you and your patience and kindness."

Martyn Hayward



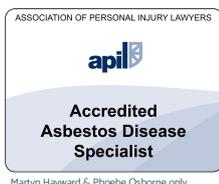
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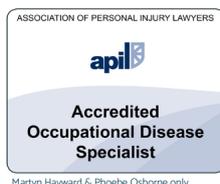
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