

The risks of exposure to Asbestos

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The risks of exposure to Asbestos

Asbestos is a natural mineral that exists in 2/3 of the earth's crust

There are more than 30 varieties, but only six are used commercially, in thousands of products.

Amianto or asbestos (from the Greek word ἀσβεστος) means "indestructible," "immortal," "inextinguishable."

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Asbestos is a material with great flexibility and very high chemical, thermal, electrical and tensile strength

AND

CHEAP

These are the reason why they have been used extensively in the industry since the nineteenth century

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Asbestos was/were used in more than 3000 products, with specific applications for different types.

Its applications are numerous including:

- **Asbestos cement tiles (about 85% of world consumption)**
- **Automobile industry**
- **Naval industry**
- **Building Coating**
- **Fireproof coating**

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The bundles of asbestos fibers tend to produce a powder of very small particles that float in the air and adhere to the clothes.

For this reason they can be easily inhaled and can cause serious health problems.

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Prolonged inhalation of asbestos fibers can lead to serious diseases:

- **Pleural Mesothelioma**
 - **Lung cancer**
 - **Asbestosis**
- **Peritoneal Mesothelioma**

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Since when do we know about the danger of asbestos to health?

As early as 1898 the chief inspector of factories in the United Kingdom reported to Parliament in his annual report the evil effects of asbestos dust.

He affirmed that the sharpened nature of the particles when present in the air in any quantity is harmful to the health.

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In 1906 a commission of the British Parliament confirmed the first cases of death caused by asbestos and *recommended that ventilation in the work places be improved, among other measures.*

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In 1918 a United States Insurance Company conducted a study that showed the occurrence of premature deaths in the asbestos industry.

In 1926 the Massachusetts Industrial Accident Commission granted for the first time to an industrial worker the right to first compensation for asbestos disease.

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Despite the occurrence of premature deaths in the asbestos industry the use of asbestos increased to an impressive scale during the XX century

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**During the XX century we assisted a
massive production of asbestos
despite the terrible effects of this
material**

Uses of Asbestos

Sprayed Coatings

- Used as fire protection and acoustic control for structural steelwork.
- Up to 85% asbestos
- Fibre release likely if disturbed. Can also degrade as it ages.



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Prolonged inhalation of asbestos fibers can lead to serious diseases:

- Pleural Mesothelioma**
- Peritoneal Mesothelioma**
- Lung cancer**
- Asbestosis**

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**We are facing a terrible cancer disease
that would be easy to avoid.**

What has already been done?

During a century



Nothing

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Prohibition

Since January 1, 2015 the European Union, declared the definitive suspension of the production and use of asbestos production

Canada has banned the use of asbestos in the country but is one of the world's largest exporters of the product, along with Russia, Brasil and other countries

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In Portugal:

Although asbestos has been banned in the European Union since 2005 it is still present in roofs, fire doors, water pipes, cisterns and water tanks in many buildings.

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In Portugal:

In 2003, the Assembly of the Republic recommended to the Government the creation of an inventory of public buildings with asbestos within one year. He also asked for a replacement plan, when the conservation of the materials or the risk to health justified it.

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In Portugal:

In 2007, a survey carried out by the Ministry of Education indicated that 729 public schools with fiber cement coverage existed at the national level.

Until 2016 at least 117 schools have been under construction to remove asbestos materials

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In Portugal:

**Data from 2008 estimated thousands
of private buildings has asbestos in its
structures**

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In Portugal in the last 10 years there were on average 36 deaths per year per mesothelioma

More rare in official statistics are deaths from asbestosis, also caused by asbestos: about three cases a year on average over the same period

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**Portugal is far from the countries with the highest
asbestos mortality rate.**

**At the top of the list is the United Kingdom, where
2286 people died on average of mesothelioma
victims between 2007 and 2011, according to data
from the British health authorities.**

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**We have to work to remove all remaining
asbestos**

It's a public health problem.

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! DANGER

**Asbestos Dust Hazard.
Cancer & lung disease
hazard.
Authorized personnel only.**

! PELIGRO

**Peligro al inhalar el
polvo de asbestos.
Puede causar cáncer y
daños a los pulmones.
Solo personal autorizado.**

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