

## Resources

Allegheny County Asbestos Resource:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Services/Health-Department/Air-Quality/Asbestos-and-Abrasive-Blasting>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
Asbestos and Health Resource:

<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/asbestos/index.html>

**Environmental Protection Agency  
Asbestos Resource**

<https://www.epa.gov/asbestos>

**What should you do before  
disturbing existing building  
materials?**

Stop and call Allegheny County Health  
Department for more information:

836 Fulton Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15233  
412-578-8120

[alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department](http://alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department)



*This program is brought to the community by:*



**Air Quality Program**

836 Fulton Street  
Pittsburgh PA 15233

412-578-8120

[www.alleghenycounty.us/air](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/air)

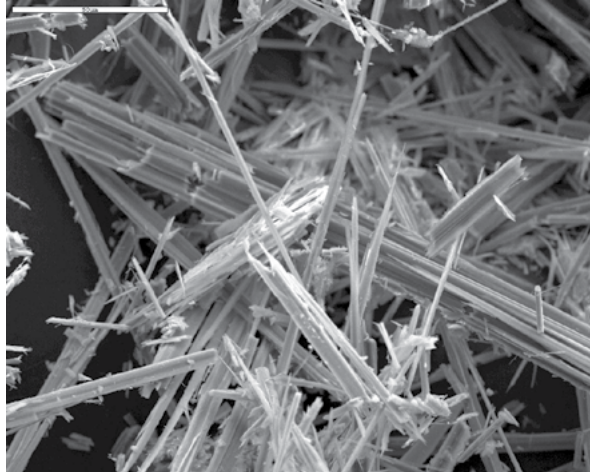
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# Asbestos And Your Health



## What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a generic name for a group of 6 naturally occurring fibrous minerals. These minerals, when disrupted, can be inhaled and lead to asbestosis, mesothelioma, and other lung cancers.



Asbestos is not a banned substance in the United States and continues to be used in some applications. Individuals working in a variety of industries are commonly exposed to its detrimental effects.

## Common Exposure Activities:

- Building Renovation
- Building Demolition
- Asbestos Removal
- Maintenance Operations<sup>1,2</sup>
- Roofing Repairs and Replacement

Generally, you can't tell whether a material contains asbestos simply by looking at it, unless it is labeled. A trained and accredited asbestos professional should take samples for analysis,

since a professional knows what to look for, and because there may be an increased health risk if fibers are released. In fact, if done incorrectly, sampling can be more hazardous than leaving the material alone. Taking samples yourself is not recommended.

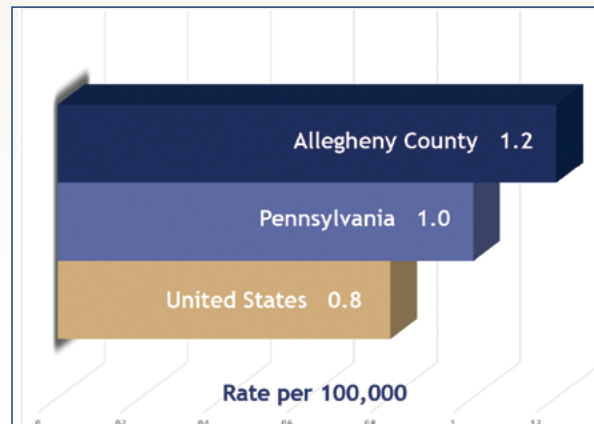
## Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma is a type of life-threatening lung cancer linked to the inhalation of asbestos fibers. It typically develops 20-40 years after exposure.<sup>2</sup>

Only 40% of patients survive more than one year after diagnosis.<sup>2</sup> A CDC report showed that rates of mesothelioma continue to rise even among the younger population in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

While the national mortality rate for mesothelioma is 0.8 per 100,000 individuals, the rate for Allegheny County is significantly higher at 1.2 per 100,000 individuals. From 2010-2014 there were 98 deaths from Mesothelioma in Allegheny County.

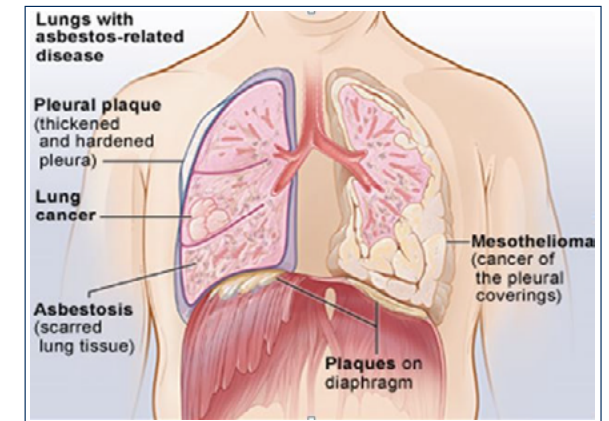
## Five-Year Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate Mesothelioma, 2010 - 2014



## Steps You can Take To Protect Yourself and Your Family

The mortality rate in Allegheny County is 50% higher than the national average.

- Be aware and limit any possible exposure around the home or on the job.
- Consult a licensed asbestos professional before disturbing building materials.
- Contact your healthcare professional with concerns of potential exposure.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of mesothelioma:
  - ◆ Shortness of breath
  - ◆ Difficulty breathing
  - ◆ Chest and/or abdominal pain<sup>3,4</sup>



1) <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/asbestos/>  
2) [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6608a3.htm#T1\\_down](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6608a3.htm#T1_down)  
3) <https://www.maacenter.org/mesothelioma/types/pleural-mesothelioma/>  
4) <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/81-123/pdfs/0041.pdf>