



S4. OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS: WHAT WE ARE MISSING FROM A PREVIOUS EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS

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Exposure to asbestos at occupational settings is by far the leading risk factor for work-related diseases in the World. Despite all forms of asbestos are known as a human carcinogen, it is still circulated in global market and is banned at only 55 countries. The use of asbestos is closely related to the development of asbestos-related diseases (ARDs) including mesothelioma and lung cancer. It is reported that a ratio of mesothelioma and asbestos-induced lung cancer is 1:1. However, lung cancer patients are seldom interviewed to ascertain additional risk factors such as asbestos.

Age-adjusted mortality rate of mesothelioma was 4.9 per million population and increased by 5.4% per year over 1994-2008 that was consequently more than doubled during this period.

Global estimation of potential years of life lost (PYLL) due to mesothelioma from 1994 to 2010 indicated a total of 2.18 million years (PYLL) or an annual average PYLL of 201,000 years. The average PYLL per decedent was 17 years.

In Asian countries, asbestos use is continuing due to economic needs which may result in asbestos-induced burden in the near future. Lessons learned by industrialized countries are valuable indicators to implement effective policy and regulation to avoid any asbestos-related burden in this region. The past occupational exposure to asbestos has caused health risks and economic burden that should require well-prepared action plans to eliminate ARDs in Asian countries.

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