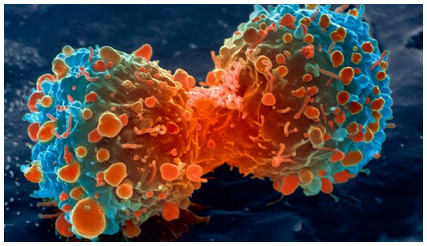
OCCUPATIONAL CANCERS



What is Cancer?

Most of the cells in your body have a life span much shorter than the body itself. There is an organized process whereby the cells perform their designated functions for a while, reproduce by division, and then die, being replaced with new cells. Blood cells, bone cells, skin cells, colon cells, and many others cells are all dying and being replaced with new ones every few days or months. For example, healthy bone marrow produces about 500 billion new blood cells per day.

The required rates of dying and reproduction are regulated in each type of cell by coding within the cell's DNA.

Sometimes, the coding in a particular cell is damaged to the point where the cell does not die when it should, or it reproduces at a much faster rate than necessary. The body has a mechanism for locating and

Carcinogens

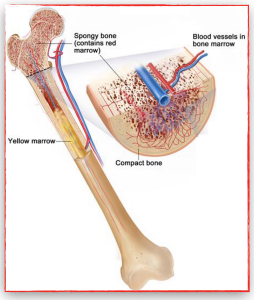
There are a large number of substances used in the workplace that are capable of causing cancer: solvents, cleaning agents, specialized paints, and a variety of other chemicals, fumes and dusts. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) lists about 100 substances as "carcinogenic to humans".

This QR Code will take you to a list of occupational carcinogens at the Center for Disease Control (CDC), compiled by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

Cancer Type and Location

A given chemical may be recognized in the medical literature as causing one type of cancer, but not another. The chemical may also be implicated in causing cancer at only one location within the body. Thus, it is critical to determine the type of cancer involved and its place of origin (i.e., its *primary site*). For litigation purposes, a primary adenocarcinoma of the lung is very different than a *metastatic* adenocarcinoma of the lung (i.e. a cancer that has spread to the lung from another location).

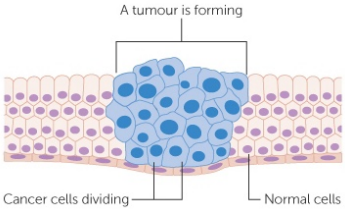
Examples:



Leukemia is a cancer of the bone marrow that results in the production of an unusually high number of white blood cells. A consensus exists in the medical and scientific community that the development of one form of leukemia - Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) - can be linked to exposure to the chemical *Benzene,* but not so for some other forms of leukemia.

What is Cancer? (cont.)

destroying these defective cells, but the mechanism is not always effective. If the defective cell survives, it produces more defective cells, and eventually will produce a huge number of unneeded cells.



Cancer is the name given to the disease process that produces unneeded cells - especially those that can invade nearby tissue and spread to other organs and areas of the body. There are over 100 types of cancers in humans, each arising in different organs or tissue cells.

Latency

The *latency period* - the time between the first significant exposure to a carcinogen and the diagnosis of the disease - varies according to the carcinogen. Arsenic can produce urinary-tract cancers 40 years after exposure. When Benzene exposure produces leukemia, it typically does so within roughly 2 to 10 years after the initial exposure.

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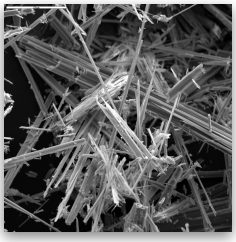
One form of liver cancer (*hepatic angiosarcoma*) has been linked to exposure to *vinyl chloride* - a gas used in the production of PVC pipe.

Certain cancers of the *nasal sinuses* have been strongly associated with occupational exposures to *wood dust*. Workers in the furniture-making industry and carpentry trades are at particular risk.

Bladder cancer can be caused by exposure to *ortho-toluidine*, a chemical used in the rubber industry. It was only recently added to the list of Group 1 carcinogens by IARC.



Mesothelioma - a cancer of the mesothelial cells surrounding the lungs and other organs - is the result of the inhalation of airborne *asbestos fibers*. It is not caused by smoking cigarettes or exposure to any other carcinogen.

Occupational Exposures

Many occupations are at a greater risk of cancer because the members will have more exposure in a day to a particular carcinogen than an average person might have in a lifetime. The *dose* experienced by a person - the amount and duration of exposure - can be important in some cancers, such as benzene-induced leukemia, but much less so in others, such as mesothelioma.

Knowledge and Experience

Occupational cancer cases are complex and require considerable knowledge of product liability law, as well as chemistry, oncology, pathology, industrial practices, industrial hygiene, and OSHA regulations. John C. Heubeck, Esq., with a degree in chemistry, employment as an Assistant Attorney General prosecuting OSHA violations, and over 30 years experience, has a unique and proven ability to litigate such cases. **Contact us for a free evaluation of your case.**