

The Williams Law Firm Mesothelioma Guidebook

Mesothelioma is more than a medical condition. It's the result of years of asbestos exposure, which you likely never saw coming until you were diagnosed. The aftermath of this diagnosis can be overwhelming, and you may be out of work, facing steep medical bills, and unsure of your rights. With the help of the experienced team at The Williams Law Firm, P.C., you can better understand your condition, treatment options, and your legal options to achieve compensation for your losses.



THE
WILLIAMS
LAW FIRM, P.C.

With over 30 years of experience and a commitment to fighting for mesothelioma victims' rights, you can trust us to handle every aspect of your claim. Our lead attorney, Joe Williams, has never lost a mesothelioma case thanks to his dedication and unwavering support. He will personally meet with you in your home to work on your case. We understand the complexities of mesothelioma cases and offer personalized guidance to help secure the justice and compensation you deserve.

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WHAT IS MESOTHELIOMA?

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What is
Mesothelioma?

How Mesothelioma
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Period

Mesothelioma is a rare form of cancer most commonly caused by asbestos exposure. Asbestos is a mineral fiber used in many products, such as building materials, insulation, and vehicle brakes, and tiles. According to the [CDC](#), 2,830 cases of this condition were reported in the U.S. in 2021, making it an uncommon form of cancer. Not only is this disease aggressive and deadly, but it's also preventable, which makes a diagnosis even more tragic. If you have received a mesothelioma diagnosis, it is important to understand the illness, treatment options, and available support, so you can make the best decisions for your health and future.

How Mesothelioma Forms

Mesothelioma takes years, even decades, to develop, with many patients experiencing symptoms 30 to 50 years after asbestos exposure. Most people are over 60 before they know they have the disease. When asbestos fibers are inhaled or swallowed, they travel to the linings of the organs, irritating and inflaming the cells. This irritation can lead to scar tissue, which may eventually develop into a mesothelioma tumor.

These malignant tumors can form in the saclike structure surrounding the lungs, called the pleura. They may also form in similar structures, including the peritoneum, which surrounds the abdominal cavity, and the pericardium, which surrounds the heart. Mesothelioma tumors may even result in a more rare type of malignancy called tunica vaginalis, which affects the tissue that surrounds the testes.

While you may assume mesothelioma tumors present themselves in a lump or "golf ball" form, this is not the case. Instead, the tumor grows in diffuse patterns and spreads across the surface of the sac covering the particular organ, such as the pleura which surrounds the lungs. Chest pain and shortness of breath are common symptoms associated with mesothelioma and these tumors.

Asbestos

While many factors, including genetics and radiation exposure, can increase the risk of mesothelioma, asbestos exposure is the most common. This low cost material is heat resistant and durable, so it was widely used through the 1970s and continued being utilized in products in the 1980s and 1990s. Despite its well-known dangers and more strict regulations, asbestos is still used in some industrial applications today, including gaskets, brake pads, and other automotive parts.

Asbestos is a known carcinogen, and when its tiny fibers are released into the air, they can be inhaled into the lungs or swallowed and work their way into the digestive system. Once in the body, those fibers can disrupt normal cell replication and cause tumors to form. Exposure to asbestos can occur from a variety of circumstances, including the following:



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- Through work with asbestos products
- As a bystander to the work of others that used asbestos materials
- From asbestos dust carried home by a family member who worked with the material
- Through environmental exposures such as living near an asbestos facility

According to [Penn Medicine](#), up to 80% of all mesothelioma cases result from primary exposure to asbestos, meaning direct exposure to fibers. Unfortunately, family members and those who work with or live with those who have been exposed to asbestos may also develop mesothelioma second-hand if someone brought fibers home on their clothing.

Long Latency Period

After being exposed to asbestos, decades may pass before you experience symptoms that lead to a mesothelioma diagnosis. Most cases of mesothelioma are diagnosed 30 to 50 years after exposure to asbestos. If you or a loved one live in an old building or work in construction, industrial sites, shipyards, or the automotive industry, knowing the signs of mesothelioma can help you detect the disease as early as possible. Unfortunately, there is currently no cure for mesothelioma, but early detection increases survival rates and quality of life in the years following diagnosis.



5 TYPES OF MESOTHELIOMA

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5 Types of Mesothelioma

Pleural Mesothelioma

Peritoneal Mesothelioma

Pericardial Mesothelioma

Testicular Mesothelioma

Benign Mesothelioma

Infographic

Mesothelioma is often associated with the lining of the lungs, but the disease can develop in other areas of the body. Each type of mesothelioma is based on the location, symptoms, and treatment options. Understanding the five types of mesothelioma provides clarity on how this disease affects the body and what steps may be taken to address it. The five types of mesothelioma include the following:

Pleural Mesothelioma

This is the most common type of mesothelioma, and it affects the lining of the lungs. Symptoms often include shortness of breath, dry cough and chest pain. Although it originates in the chest cavity, pleural mesothelioma can metastasize in several other organs throughout the body, including the brain.

Peritoneal Mesothelioma

Peritoneal mesothelioma is the second most prevalent form. Most people with peritoneal mesothelioma complain about severe abdominal pain or difficulty with bowel movements. This type often spreads to the liver, spleen, or bowel.

Pericardial Mesothelioma

When mesothelioma forms around the heart, it restricts the delivery of oxygen to the body, which can cause chest pain and difficulty breathing.

Testicular Mesothelioma

Because it is a more rare form, testicular mesothelioma is often not diagnosed until lumps form on the testes and is typically found during surgery or treatment for other conditions.

Benign Mesothelioma

With the development of mesothelioma in any region of the body, tumors begin to form in the lining around the affected organs. In the majority of these cases, the tumors are malignant, but it is possible to develop benign mesotheliomas that are not cancerous.

Most benign mesotheliomas develop in the abdominal cavity and occur in people who do not have a history of asbestos exposure. These kinds of tumors are found most often in young or middle-aged women and pose no serious risk. However, if the tumor grows larger than 7 cm, it can cause painful swelling, seizures, and even a coma.





HOW ARE PEOPLE EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS?

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How Are People Exposed to Asbestos?

On-the-Job Asbestos Exposure

Other Common Sources of Asbestos Exposure

Because asbestos is the leading cause of mesothelioma, knowing whether you have been exposed to inhalation of asbestos fibers is the first step in determining your risk for developing the disease. If you have already been diagnosed with mesothelioma, identifying where you were exposed and is responsible can help you pursue compensation for your losses.

On-the-Job Asbestos Exposure

Many mesothelioma victims were exposed to asbestos at work. Loved ones who live with people exposed at their job are at a high risk of mesothelioma. Some of the most at-risk workers include the following:

- Insulators
- Plumbers
- Pipefitters
- Construction workers
- Navy seamen
- Railroad workers
- Factory workers
- Ship builders

Many of these occupations deal with materials, like gaskets, automotive parts, construction materials, adhesives, and insulation, that contain asbestos, putting them at risk of inhaling or swallowing the tiny, carcinogenic fibers. Our knowledgeable lawyers at Williams Law Firm work closely with you to determine you were exposed at work and how to hold the liable party accountable.

Other Common Sources of Asbestos Exposure

Not every case of mesothelioma can be linked to direct exposure at a jobsite. Many people were exposed to asbestos in other ways, including the following:

- Through close relatives who unknowingly brought the fibers home on their clothing
- Living in an area where asbestos was mined or processed
- Renovating a home that contained asbestos in the building materials
- Serving on a military base or ship which used asbestos in its construction

You are at greater risk for developing mesothelioma if you had a high level of exposure to asbestos, you were exposed for a prolonged period of time, or you were exposed at a young age. Not everyone who has been exposed to asbestos fibers will develop mesothelioma, but people who were only exposed for short periods of time have developed this form of cancer. Other factors, such as genetic predisposition, can increase your likelihood of developing mesothelioma.



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Asbestos in the Work Place

Types of Workers at the Greatest Risk for Developing Mesothelioma

Widespread Asbestos Use

The [National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety](#) has identified more than 75 groups of workers that are known to have been exposed to asbestos during work. One study estimated workers living with asbestos-related cancer exceeded half the workers exposed to the fibers between 1940 and 1970. Because mesothelioma takes so long to develop and show symptoms, those exposed during this time may just start to see the signs of the disease.

Types of Workers at the Greatest Risk for Developing Mesothelioma

With asbestos's widespread use until the late 20th century, many types of workers are at a high risk of developing mesothelioma. Miners are the workers who are most at-risk for developing mesothelioma from asbestos exposure because asbestos is a naturally-occurring material often extracted from mines or contaminating other minerals. The [R.T. Vanderbilt talc mines](#) in New York State and the [W.R. Grace and Co. vermiculite mine](#) in Libby, Montana, are two of the U.S. mines with the most cases of mesothelioma reported by past workers. Some of the other most hazardous occupations include:

- Building and repairing ships
- Manufacturing jobs
- Railroad workers
- Steel workers
- Construction sites where asbestos was used in construction

If you work or previously worked in these industries and have been diagnosed with mesothelioma, The Williams Law Firm, P.C. is here to help you hold your employer accountable for your damages and fight for the justice you deserve.

Widespread Asbestos Use

During the late 19th century and most of the 20th century asbestos use became widespread in the U.S. for its heat resistance, durability, and affordability to mine. Because of these good qualities, it was incorporated into many construction materials and consumer products, including the following:

- Insulation
- Pipe covering
- Gaskets
- Asbestos packing
- Refractory
- Asbestos bricks
- Transite boards
- Joint compound



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- Floor tiles
- Ceiling tiles
- Roofing products

While asbestos is such a versatile material, it is toxic and a carcinogen. Therefore, workers that currently deal or have dealt with the manufacturing or use of any of these products are at risk for developing mesothelioma.



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Asbestos Job Sites in New York

New York is home to numerous industries, including construction, steel, and shipyards. Unfortunately, many of these jobs exposed workers to asbestos, increasing their risk of developing mesothelioma. The following is a partial list of buildings and sites in the New York area that are known to have used or contain asbestos:

- Bethlehem Steel Shipyards
- Brooklyn Navy Yard
- Chrysler Building
- Con Ed Power Plants
- Dannskammer Generating Station
- Domino Sugar Plant
- Empire State Building
- Georgia-Pacific Facilities
- Grumman Aerospace Facilities
- IBM Buildings
- Indian Point Power Plant
- John F. Kennedy International Airport
- Kearny Generating Station
- LaGuardia Airport
- LILCO Power Plants
- Madison Square Garden
- New York Piers
- New York World's Fair
- New York 34th Street Post Office
- Roseton Generating Station
- Schaefer Brewing Company
- Todd Shipyards
- Tomkins Cove
- Union Carbide Facilities
- U.S. Gypsum Plants
- World Trade Center

For a more comprehensive list of job sites in and around New York and New Jersey that have exposed workers to asbestos, please visit [Asbestos Job Sites in New York](#). If you have worked in any of these places, you may be at risk for developing mesothelioma and you may be entitled to recover compensation for your injuries.



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Asbestos at Home

When Asbestos is Dangerous

Asbestos Hazards at Home

Although asbestos is most commonly encountered on the job, it can also be found in the home, especially in older buildings. The good news is the presence of asbestos in your home is not necessarily a danger to your family's health.

When Asbestos is Dangerous

Asbestos is a toxic material, but it only becomes dangerous in the home when it is disturbed or damaged and its fibers are released into the air, making them inhalable or swallowable. This can happen for a number of reasons, including renovation, demolition, and weather damage. Inhaling or swallowing these fibers can cause fibrosis, which is a scarring response in your body, as well as malignancy or cancer.

If you suspect asbestos material in your home, you should consult a professional before you attempt to remove or repair it to ensure the process is safe and avoids exposure to you and your family. An extensive asbestos abatement procedure will likely be required to remove the material and protect you from health risks.

Asbestos Hazards at Home

Many homeowners find out that their home contains asbestos when they are looking into or starting home renovations. Some of the more common areas where you may encounter asbestos in your home include the following:

- Boilers and heating equipment insulated with asbestos
- Roofing materials
- Asbestos siding
- Insulation in the walls
- Joint compound as well as plaster walls
- Textured paint and patching compounds
- Artificial ashes and embers for gas fireplaces
- Protective paper, millboard or cement sheets around wood fireplaces
- Vinyl floor tiles or vinyl sheets for flooring
- Hot water pipes in old houses could be coated with asbestos

If you suspect that your house contains asbestos materials, you should hire a professional to confirm that the material is present. You can also hire professional contractors to remove the asbestos containing materials. Additionally, if you have been exposed to asbestos in your home due to a negligent contractor, construction worker, or other party, The Williams Law Firm, P.C. can help you seek justice and the compensation you deserve.



MESOTHELIOMA GUIDE FOR VETERANS

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Mesothelioma Guide for Veterans

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Infographic

Additional Financial Assistance and Resources for Veterans

Support Networks and Resources for Veterans with Mesothelioma

According to the [Mesothelioma Veterans Center](#), veterans account for one in three mesothelioma cases every year. This staggering statistic is due to the widespread use of asbestos in military ships, bases, and vehicles. While all branches relied on asbestos before the dangers of the material were widely known, the Navy used more of it than any other branch. Ships used asbestos to keep the vessels fireproof and durable, putting those who worked on the ships and in shipyards at a higher risk of mesothelioma.

If you are a veteran who has been exposed to asbestos and developed mesothelioma decades later, receiving specialized support can help you access the treatments, benefits, and compensation you deserve. Our trusted lawyers proudly represent veterans and their families across the country, fighting tirelessly for their rights.

Understanding Asbestos Exposure in the Military

Before the 1980s, asbestos-containing materials were a popular choice for military ships, vehicles, and base construction, putting members of all branches at risk of developing mesothelioma. This issue affects members of all branches in the following ways:

- **ARMY**

U.S. Army veterans may have been exposed to asbestos in products like cement, insulation, and wiring. Army bases were also built using asbestos-containing insulation and other materials.

- **NAVY**

Navy ships used asbestos products for their heat resistance and durability, exposing Navy veterans to the toxic fibers.

- **MARINE CORPS**

Those who served in the Marine Corps may have been exposed if they worked on ships or in shipyards or if they serviced planes or vehicles, many of which used asbestos materials.

- **AIR FORCE**

Asbestos was commonly used in brakes, gaskets, and clutches to prevent planes from catching fire. Air Force veterans who worked in these planes or built these parts have likely been exposed to asbestos.

- **COAST GUARD**

The U.S. Coast Guard used asbestos to keep their ships fireproof. Therefore, veterans who worked aboard these ships in boiler rooms, engine rooms, and other areas endured long-term exposure.



Service members who worked with or around asbestos-containing materials may have unknowingly brought the dangerous fibers home on their hair, clothing, or equipment, exposing their family members. Whether you served in the military or live with a veteran and were exposed to asbestos, you have the right to file a claim and pursue compensation.

VA Benefits for Mesothelioma

If you are a veteran who was exposed to asbestos and have developed mesothelioma, you may qualify for financial and medical VA benefits, including the following:

- **DISABILITY COMPENSATION**

As of 2024, veterans with service-related mesothelioma typically receive a **100% VA disability rating**, ensuring they receive the highest payout possible. As of 2025, married mesothelioma veterans can receive \$4,044.91 each month in disability compensation.

- **VA HEALTHCARE ACCESS**

VA Healthcare allows mesothelioma veterans to receive the treatments they need at little to no cost from some of the best specialized doctors and cancer centers in the nation.

- **VA DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (DIC)**

VA DIC is monthly compensation for family members of a veteran who passed away from service-related mesothelioma. Most survivor benefits like this one are available to surviving spouses and dependent children.

At The Williams Law Firm, P.C., we can help you determine the VA benefits you qualify for and how to navigate the application process, so you can focus on your treatment.

Navigating the VA Claims Process

Dealing with a mesothelioma diagnosis can be overwhelming, so we are here to help you file for VA benefits, so you can get high-quality treatment without worrying about medical bills. The steps involved in this process include the following:



CONTACT THE WILLIAMS LAW FIRM, P.C.

If you have been diagnosed with service-related mesothelioma, contact us to understand if you qualify for VA benefits.



GATHER EVIDENCE:

We conduct a thorough investigation to gather evidence, such as medical records, military service records, and expert testimony, to prove your diagnosis is connected to your time in the service.



FILE A CLAIM

We help you find the information you need to fill out VA Form 21-526EZ.



REVIEW

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will review your claim and award you benefits if you meet the qualifications. If you already receive VA benefits upon your mesothelioma diagnosis, we can help increase your disability rating to 100%.

If your VA claim is denied, you can fight for the benefits you deserve by making your own appeal.

14 Additional Financial Assistance and Resources for Veterans

Veterans with service-related mesothelioma have a wide range of options to receive financial assistance with their treatment and other losses their diagnosis has caused. These additional resources include the following:

- **ASBESTOS TRUST FUND**

Manufacturers set up asbestos trust funds to compensate those who have developed mesothelioma through asbestos exposure they caused. Workers who have been exposed by their employer, people who used asbestos-containing products, and family members who lost a loved one from asbestos exposure may be eligible.

- **VA PENSION PROGRAM**

As of 2024, if you have a net worth under \$159,240, you may qualify for VA pension benefits and receive a monthly payout based on your unique case.

Our knowledgeable lawyers can help you determine if you qualify for these programs as a veteran or a family member of a veteran with service-related mesothelioma.

Support Networks and Resources for Veterans with Mesothelioma

Getting diagnosed with mesothelioma can be overwhelming both physically and emotionally, but you do not have to handle your journey alone. Support groups can be a great way to connect with other veterans battling cancer and receive advice to get through your treatment. In-person and online support groups for veterans include the following:

- **Hospitals:** VA or civilian hospitals often offer support groups for patients.
- **Community centers:** Cancer support groups often meet in community facilities, like churches, veteran centers, or recreation centers.
- **CancerCare:** This organization hosts online and in-person support groups for mesothelioma patients, caregivers, and those who have lost loved ones to cancer.
- **The Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation:** This foundation hosts online support groups for mesothelioma patients, loved ones, and survivors. They also have a private Facebook group for mesothelioma patients.
- **Veterans Crisis Line:** The Veteran Crisis Line helps veterans and their families in crisis. Dial 988 and press 1 to access the line at any time.

Additionally, veterans with service-related mesothelioma can use the following additional resources to learn more about their asbestos exposure, how the VA claims process works, and the benefits they may be eligible to receive:



- **VA Benefits Eligibility Checklist:** Quick list to verify eligibility for VA benefits.
- **VA Claims Process Flowchart:** Visual flowchart outlining each step in filing a VA claim, with tips on documentation and timelines.

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- **Veteran Service Organization (VSO) Contact Sheet:** List of reputable VSOs with contact information for claims assistance.
- **Military Exposure Log:** A sheet for veterans to log where, when, and how they were exposed to asbestos, including key service dates and locations.

We understand the impact mesothelioma can have on patients, caregivers, and their families, so we work closely with our clients to find the support and resources they need throughout their treatment.



ASBESTOS USE IN THE U.S.: UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPOSURE RISK

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Asbestos Use
in the U.S.:
Understanding
Your Exposure Risk

Banned Uses of
Asbestos

Asbestos
Containing
Products

Know Your
Exposure Risk

Without exposure to asbestos, almost all mesothelioma patients would not have the disease. This preventability makes the disease even more tragic. While the dangers of asbestos are now well-known and documented, the material is not completely banned in the U.S., and it is still present in many products.

Banned Uses of Asbestos

In March 2024, chrysotile asbestos was banned and phased out over time. With this law, the following uses of asbestos are banned:

- New uses of asbestos
- Flooring felt
- Specialty paper
- Commercial paper
- Corrugated paper
- Rollboard

Despite this ruling, there are still several permitted uses for asbestos, including in talc products, building materials, and automotive parts, like gaskets and brakes. With asbestos's fireproofing ability and affordability, achieving a total ban has been unsuccessful and challenged by the industries who use it.

Asbestos Containing Products

While many uses of asbestos are banned, many products that contained the fiber and were previously installed are still present in homes and workplaces throughout the U.S., including the following:

- Ceiling and floor tiles
- Joint compounds and plasters
- Insulation
- Paint
- Pipe covering
- Furnace and boiler components

If you work with these products in your job or have them in your home, you may be exposed to asbestos fibers. Taking the initiative to question whether your environment contains asbestos and whether you are at risk for developing mesothelioma can decrease your risk of exposure and chances of developing mesothelioma.



Know Your Exposure Risk

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Being aware of what products and work places put you at risk for asbestos exposure can help you protect yourself and your family against an increased risk of developing mesothelioma. If you are concerned about asbestos in your home, you can hire a professional to inspect your house and remove materials with asbestos in them. Any chance of materials releasing asbestos fibers into your environment is a danger to you and your family.

At your job, your employer should know whether you are using any materials that contain asbestos. The [**Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)**](#) requires employers to protect workers by monitoring the work environment for concentrations of airborne asbestos and providing facemasks to prevent inhalation of asbestos fibers.



UNDERSTANDING MESOTHELIOMA SYMPTOMS AND THE DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS

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Understanding Mesothelioma Symptoms and the Diagnostic Process

Symptoms of Mesothelioma

Common Symptoms for Each Type of Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma is not an easy cancer to diagnose. Symptoms can take anywhere from 20 and 50 years to manifest after the first exposure to asbestos fibers. Early diagnosis and treatment is the best chance for prolonging you or your loved one's life with mesothelioma.

SYMPTOMS OF MESOTHELIOMA

Mesothelioma is so challenging to diagnose because its symptoms are often associated with other illnesses. However, if you have a history of asbestos exposure or find out you have been exposed, you should seek a medical diagnosis as soon as symptoms appear. Diagnosing and treating mesothelioma early is the best way to ensure that you have the longest, healthiest life possible while dealing with the disease and have the broadest range of treatment options.

Common Symptoms for Each Type of Mesothelioma

Each type of mesothelioma can be recognized by its most common symptoms, which include the following:

- PLEURAL MESOTHELIOMA

Chest pain, shortness of breath, chronic dry cough, weight loss, fever or night sweats, and fatigue.

- PERITONEAL MESOTHELIOMA

Abdominal pain and swelling, nausea or vomiting, constipation, diarrhea, weight loss, and fatigue.

- PERICARDIAL MESOTHELIOMA

Irregular heartbeat, chest pain, coughing, fever or night sweats, difficulty breathing, and fatigue.

- TESTICULAR MESOTHELIOMA

Testicular lumps and swelling of the scrotum. Many of the symptoms of mesothelioma, regardless of the type, are caused by fluid accumulation.



Mesothelioma often causes fluid accumulation in the affected area which can cause swelling and discomfort around the affected organs. Not every person will exhibit all symptoms, but if you experience any of them, it's essential to seek diagnosis and treatment as soon as possible.

HOW IS MESOTHELIOMA DIAGNOSED?

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How is Mesothelioma Diagnosed?

Typical Process for Diagnosis

Imaging Tests

Biopsies

Blood Tests

With the difficulty of diagnosing mesothelioma, it is crucial to see a doctor if you know you have been exposed to asbestos or if you show symptoms of mesothelioma, like shortness of breath and chest pain. This gives you the best chance of detecting and treating the disease early. While every patient is different, you can generally expect image testing, biopsies, and blood tests during the diagnostic process.

Typical Process for Diagnosis

If you start experiencing mesothelioma symptoms, you will likely receive a diagnosis within a few months. This process involves the following steps to assess the severity of the condition and the necessary treatments:

- **Physical examination:** Your doctor will discuss your medical history and conduct a thorough physical examination.
- **Testing:** Based on your symptoms and physical exam, your doctor may assume you have pneumonia or another common illness, but they can order more testing if they suspect you have been exposed to asbestos.
- **Imaging and biopsy:** If image testing, like X-rays or CT scans, reveal any abnormalities, you may need a biopsy to confirm its cancer.

During the diagnosis process you will generally work with several doctors, including a general practitioner, a pulmonologist, radiologist, surgeon, and oncologist. Getting a second opinion from a specialist who works with asbestos-related diseases is a good way to confirm the diagnosis and get as much information as you can about current treatments and clinical trials.

Imaging Tests

Imaging tests are used to look at your internal body structure without the need for surgery. Your doctor may use any of the following common imaging tests for diagnosis:

- **CT scans:** This technology uses X-rays to create cross-sectional images of the body to determine the cancer's location and stage.
- **X-rays:** Chest X-rays are often the first step of a mesothelioma diagnosis, and they can help identify fluid buildup, calcium deposits, and changes in the tissue.
- **MRI:** MRI scans are similar to CT scans, but they use radio waves and magnets instead of X-rays to show detailed images of the body's soft tissue.
- **PET scans:** During this test, radioactive sugar is put into the blood. The cancer cells absorb the sugar quicker than normal cells, so a special camera takes a picture of the body and shows radioactive areas of the body. These results can help determine if the thickening of organ lining



A combination of CT and PET scans are considered standard for mesothelioma diagnosis, but your doctor may order all of these tests when trying to determine the cause of your symptoms.

Biopsies

A biopsy is a more invasive diagnostic tool because it requires surgery. During a biopsy, your doctor will take a small fluid or tissue sample from the tumor to determine whether the growth is malignant. From an examination of this tissue, doctors can usually tell where the cancer originated in the body and what type of cells are involved. This identification helps doctors select the most effective treatment.

Blood Tests

While blood tests are not enough to diagnose mesothelioma on their own, they can check for certain markers and proteins in the blood that indicate the disease. For example, MESOMARK assay tests can identify higher levels of fibulin-3 and soluble mesothelin-related peptides (SMRPs), which are often present in mesothelioma patients. These blood tests combined with image testing and biopsies can confirm your diagnosis and the mesothelioma's stage.



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Asking Your Doctor
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Find a Cancer
Center

When you are diagnosed with mesothelioma, it is always a good idea to get a second opinion because the disease is so rare. The best ways to confirm your diagnosis and detect mesothelioma early are to see a specialist or go to a cancer center.

Asking Your Doctor for Help

If you saw your general practitioner about your mesothelioma symptoms, they may have already sent you to a specialist to confirm your diagnosis. Many family doctors will enlist the help of an expert if they see anomalies in your imaging tests. If you live in a metropolitan area, you may already be in contact with a local mesothelioma specialist.

Mesothelioma is a very rare disease, so if your doctor has not worked with many mesothelioma cases, they may recommend you seek a second opinion from a doctor with more experience with this very specific condition. Our dedicated lawyers at The Williams Law Firm, P.C, are here to help you find a specialist for a second opinion and a better understanding of your diagnosis.

Find a Cancer Center

If your doctor does not have a good recommendation for where to go for a second opinion, you can find a mesothelioma expert on your own to confirm your diagnosis. The [National Cancer Institute](#) is a good resource for mesothelioma information and finding a designated cancer center in your area that will talk you through your treatment and clinical trial you may be eligible for.



STAGING MESOTHELIOMA

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Staging Mesothelioma

The Tumor Node
Metastasis (TNM)
Staging System

What the Stages
Mean

Infographic

Staging mesothelioma is similar to staging other forms of cancer. Classifying how far mesothelioma has developed allows doctors to identify the treatment options that will be most effective.

The Tumor Node Metastasis (TNM) Staging System

The American Joint Committee on Cancer developed the TNM staging system, and it was adopted by the International Mesothelioma Interest Group as the most universally accepted system for staging pleural mesothelioma. The system categorizes how advanced your cancer is and helps inform the treatment process.

The abbreviation TNM stands for the following three different elements of a mesothelioma diagnosis:

- **Tumor:** The location and size of the tumor.
- **Node:** Whether the lymph nodes have been affected.
- **Metastasized:** Whether tumors have spread to other parts of the body.

Taking each of these factors into account, your doctor will stage mesothelioma as stage IA, IB, II, III, or IV.

What the Stages Mean

Each stage has a different prognosis. Patients with stage I mesothelioma typically survive for longer periods of time and respond better to treatment. Each stage can contain variant combinations of tumor, node and metastasizing, but in general, each stage progresses along the following lines:

• STAGE IA

During this early stage, mesothelioma cells are in the pleura lining of the chest wall on one side of your chest. The cells may also be in the lining of your lungs or diaphragm. Mesothelioma in this stage has not spread to the lymph nodes or other areas.

• STAGE IB

Stage IB means mesothelioma cells are present in all layers of the pleura lining one side of your chest and start to grow into the lungs, chest wall, diaphragm, or other affected area. During this stage, the cancer has not spread to other parts of the body.

• STAGE II

This is a more advanced form of mesothelioma in which the cancer cells are in all layers of pleura lining on one side of your chest, spreading into the diaphragm or lung tissue and the nearby lymph node on the same side as the main cancer.



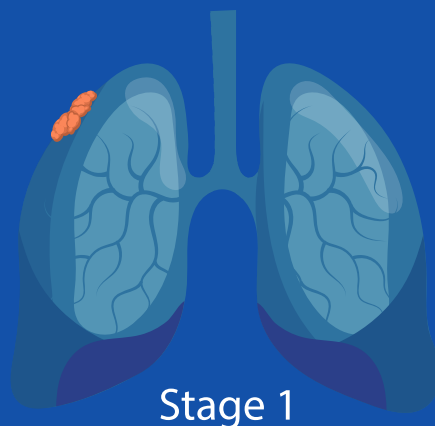
- STAGE III

During this stage, the mesothelioma affects deeper tissues in nearby organs and has spread to distant lymph nodes. Tumors in this stage may be removed with surgery.

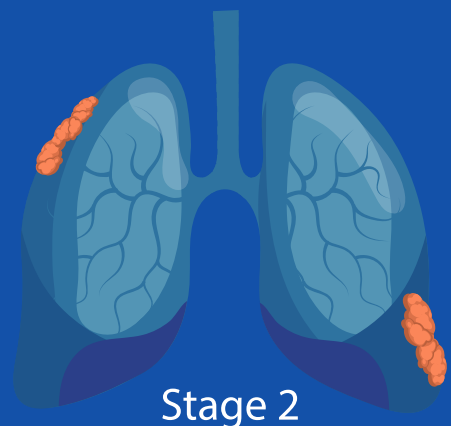
- STAGE IV

The most advanced form of mesothelioma, stage IV occurs when tumors have spread and formed in distant parts of the body.

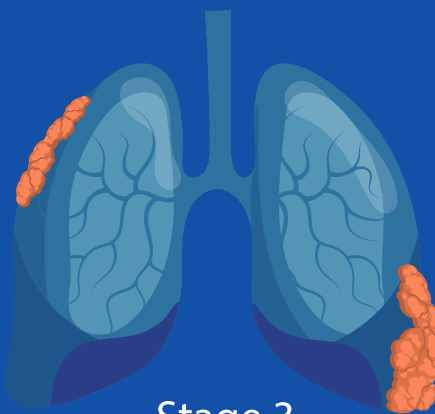
Accurate staging is an essential part of developing a treatment plan, which may include surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and palliative care. While the stage of your mesothelioma plays a role in your survival rate, your age, gender, the site of the cancer, and cellular makeup of the tumor all contribute to your prognosis.



Stage 1
Tumors begin
to form of the pleura



Stage 2
Tumors begin to spread
from original origin



Stage 3
Tumors keep spreading
on the pleura



Stage 4
Tumors nearly
encapsulate the lung

24 TREATMENTS FOR MESOTHELIOMA

SECTIONS

Treatments for Mesothelioma

Traditional Treatment Options

Emerging and Alternative Treatments

Currently, there is no cure for mesothelioma. Pleural mesothelioma has an [average five-year survival rate](#) of 12%, but this does not indicate what will happen with your particular case. With the continuing advances in technology and the rising percentage of the five-year survival rate, there is hope that mesothelioma treatments can prolong and increase quality of life for those suffering with the disease.

Traditional Treatment Options

Each year, approximately [3,000 people](#) are diagnosed with mesothelioma, but the number of people living with and surviving the disease is continually increasing. Some patients live ten years or longer with treatment with both traditional and alternative treatments. Common traditional mesothelioma treatments include the following:

- **Surgery:** A surgical procedure can remove the tumor and surrounding tissue and reduce fluid backup. In the early stages, this may cure the mesothelioma, but in more advanced stages, surgery can only remove some of the cancer and reduce symptoms.
- **Chemotherapy:** Chemotherapy uses anti-cancer drugs to shrink the tumor and reduce your symptoms. This treatment is often combined with radiation or surgery.
- **Radiation:** this treatment uses high-energy beams to destroy cancer cells. It is often used after surgical procedures to eliminate remaining cancer cells.

Each patient reacts differently to each treatment, but doctors have found that treatments such as chemotherapy during surgery can slow or stop the growth of cancer cells. The caring lawyers at The Williams Law Firm, P.C. can help you find the care you need to alleviate and manage your symptoms.

Emerging and Alternative Treatments

With the continuous evolution of technology and medicine, alternative treatments for mesothelioma have emerged as effective options for patients with the disease. These innovative treatments include the following:

- IMMUNOTHERAPY

If you have pleural mesothelioma and have already had surgery or cannot have surgery, you may receive immunotherapy. This treatment uses checkpoint inhibitor drugs that help the immune system recognize and attack cancer cells.

- TARGETED THERAPY

Targeted therapy is a treatment that uses medications to attack specific chemicals in the cancer cells, causing them to die. This may be combined with chemotherapy or used if other treatments were not effective.



- **COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES**

Alternative and complementary treatments, such as acupuncture, herbal supplements, and exercises, aim to help restore balance in the body when combined with other treatments, like chemotherapy and radiation.

- **CLINICAL TRIALS**

These are studies of new treatment methods for mesothelioma. While a cure is not guaranteed, your doctor can help you find trials open to you if you are interested or if no other treatment options have been successful.

Depending on the stage of mesothelioma, the doctor may recommend a combination of treatments to remove tumors and fight the spread of cancer throughout the body. Stage I patients may be offered surgery in an attempt to remove the cancerous growth and then go through a course of chemotherapy or radiation therapy or a combination of both to attempt to destroy remaining cancer cells.

In later stages, surgery is usually not an option because the cancer is too widespread. In these circumstances, chemotherapy and radiation may be the only options to fight the disease. For those patients who are not strong enough to undergo surgery, alternative therapies may be the best option.



SECTIONS

Hospice and Other Care

Hospice Care for Mesothelioma Patients

Alternative Care Options

Many people think of hospice as the last resort, but it is actually a service dedicated to helping you and your family cope with the demands and stresses of mesothelioma treatment and care.

Hospice Care for Mesothelioma Patients

Through a team that usually includes a physician, a nurse, a home healthcare aid, a counselor or spiritual person, and a social worker, hospice provides full service compassionate care for patients whose mesothelioma has progressed beyond treatment. Hospice can offer a variety of services, including the following:

- Nursing services
- Pain management
- Medical supplies
- Nutrition counseling
- Spiritual support

If you suffer from pleural mesothelioma in particular, hospice workers can help position your body in a way that makes it easier to breathe. They can also customize nutrition plans to ensure you get enough fluids and nutrients in your everyday diet. Your hospice care providers may also administer medication to reduce your pain and make you more comfortable.

Beyond the physical, hospice care can also help with emotional aspects of your treatment by providing counseling or introducing you to support groups. They can also help with end-of-life arrangements, such as advance directives and wills. If you are interested in how hospice can help you during this difficult time, talk to your doctor about getting a referral to a local hospice care provider.

Alternative Care Options

Depending on your receptivity to treatment, you may not be ready for hospice care. Your family may have the ability to meet your needs at home or with the help of an at-home caregiver. You can also explore assisted living options, which can allow you to be more independent while still getting the time and attention you need. Discussing your options openly with your doctors and your loved ones will help you make the right decisions for you.



MESOTHELIOMA DOCTORS AND TREATMENT CENTERS

SECTIONS

Mesothelioma Doctors and Treatment Centers

Northeast

Southeast

Midwest

West

Finding mesothelioma doctors you trust and a treatment center where you feel comfortable is vital to treating your cancer and giving you the peace of mind that you are in good hands for your medical care.

You should be able to find a cancer center that specializes in the treatment of mesothelioma in your region. The following is a list of some of the leading cancer centers around the country.

Northeast

- Brigham and Women's Hospital (*Boston*)
- Cancer Treatment Centers of America (*Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Tulsa, Phoenix*)
- The Cleveland Clinic and Taussig Cancer Institute (*Cleveland, Florida, Nevada*)
- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (*Boston*)
- Fox Chase Cancer Center (*Pennsylvania*)
- Johns Hopkins Hospitals and the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center (*Baltimore*)
- Massachusetts General Hospital (*Boston*)
- Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (*New York, New Jersey*)
- Mount Sinai Hospital (*Manhattan*)
- New York Hospital Queens (*Queens*)
- New York-Presbyterian Hospital (*New York*)
- New York University Cancer Institute/NY Langone Medical Center (*New York*)
- The Ohio State University James Cancer Center (*Columbus*)
- University of Pennsylvania Abramson Cancer Center (*Philadelphia*)
- University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute and Hillman Cancer Center (*Pennsylvania*)
- Weill Cornell Medical College (*New York*)
- Winthrop University Hospital Institute for Cancer Care (*New York*)

Southeast

- Cancer Treatment Centers of America (*Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Tulsa, Phoenix*)
- The Cleveland Clinic and Taussig Cancer Institute (*Cleveland, Florida, Nevada*)
- Duke Cancer Institute (*North Carolina*)
- Georgia Cancer Specialists (*Georgia*)
- H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center (*Florida*)
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center (*Arizona, Florida, Minnesota*)



28 Midwest

- Cancer Treatment Centers of America (*Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Tulsa, Phoenix*)
- Edward Cancer Center and Multidisciplinary Thoracic Oncology Clinic (*Illinois*)
- Marquette General Cancer Center (*Michigan*)
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center (*Arizona, Florida, Minnesota*)
- University of Chicago Comprehensive Cancer Center (*Chicago*)
- University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center (*Ann Arbor*)
- University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center (*Madison*)

West

- Cancer Treatment Centers of America (*Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Tulsa, Phoenix*)
- The Cleveland Clinic and Taussig Cancer Institute (*Cleveland, Florida, Nevada*)
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center (*Arizona, Florida, Minnesota*)
- Ronal Reagan UCLA Medical Center (*California*)
- Stanford Cancer Institute (*California*)
- University of California-San Francisco Medical Center/UCSF Cancer Research Institute (*San Francisco*)
- University of Washington Medical Center (*Washington*)

For more detailed information on any of these cancer centers, see [The Williams Law Firm, P.C.'s list](#) of mesothelioma support and resources.



PAYING FOR TREATMENT

SECTIONS

Paying for Treatment

Compensation from the Responsible Party

Health Insurance

After receiving a mesothelioma diagnosis, one of your biggest concerns may be how you will pay for medical treatment. With the help of your health insurance, government programs, like Medicare and Medicaid, and an experienced lawyer, you can focus on your treatment without worrying about the financial burden.

Compensation from the Responsible Party

Most mesothelioma cases are preventable, meaning if you had not been exposed to asbestos, you would not have developed the disease. Therefore, you have the right to file a claim and recover damages from the liable party who caused your exposure. Thousands of people with mesothelioma have received financial awards through asbestos litigation. In addition to compensation for medical bills, you may also be able to recover compensation for the following:

- Lost wages from missed work
- Loss of earning capacity
- Pain and suffering
- Emotional support
- Loss of consortium
- Reduced quality of life
- Wrongful death

At The Williams Law Firm, P.C., we have never lost a mesothelioma case, so you can trust us to help you file a strong claim and fight for the compensation you deserve.

Health Insurance

Your health insurance will likely cover some of your costs, but usually not everything. Traditional insurance programs generally cover about 80 percent of your costs, leaving you responsible for the remaining 20 percent. These plans often have a lifetime cap on the maximum amount they will pay out, which is also similar to how Medicare works. Even if you have an HMO plan that covers “everything,” you may still have to pay co-pays and other out-of-pocket expenses.

When talking with your insurance company about your coverage, you should ask about what kind of coverage you have for prescriptions and the treatments you need, as prescription costs can be significant for mesothelioma patients. Our seasoned lawyers can help you maximize your coverage and understand what to ask your insurance company to reduce your financial burden.



SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR DEALING WITH MESOTHELIOMA

SECTIONS

Support Resources
for Dealing with
Mesothelioma

Support Groups

Medical Assistance

Dealing with mesothelioma is more than just fighting the cancer in your system. It can also be a mental battle. You may experience depression and anxiety, grappling with your mortality and having difficult conversations with family. This can be too much for one person to handle, which is why you should not have to face these challenges alone. Fortunately, you have several support resources available to help you through your treatment.

Support Groups

Developing a support network you can rely on during this emotionally taxing time will help you process the stress, anger, and confusion that often comes with a mesothelioma diagnosis. You may already have a solid support system through your family, friends, or church, but many mesothelioma patients find it beneficial to join a support group.

In-person and online support groups fill the need for personal and social interaction. Many patients find new friends and develop strong bonds with other mesothelioma patients and families who are going through similar experiences. Groups like **Cancer Support Community** or **CancerCare** hold meetings and have online chat groups that provide the emotional help you need to get through your treatment. Many groups also provide support for family members who are faced with the loss of a loved one.

Medical Assistance

In addition to the care you receive at your primary treatment center, you may need medical assistance at home due to the toll mesothelioma can take on your body. Your family may provide at-home care, but it can be stressful and potentially put strains on your relationships. Fortunately, live-in nurses and caregivers can provide assistance as often as you need. You may even consider assisted living. Our caring lawyers at The Williams Law Firm, P.C. can help you find the right arrangement in your area.



31 **HELP FOR STRESS, DEPRESSION, AND OTHER PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES**

SECTIONS

**Help for Stress,
Depression,
and Other
Psychological
Issues**

Understanding Your
Emotions

Talking to Someone
Outside Your Family

Emotions can run high for you and your family as you come to terms with your mesothelioma diagnosis and what that means for your future. These feelings can be just as difficult to grapple with as the impact mesothelioma has on your physical health. Understanding these emotions and getting the support you need can help you process your feelings and move forward with your treatment.

Understanding Your Emotions

Coping with your diagnosis and realizing your future is on a completely different course than you planned can take a toll on your mental health. You may experience the five stages of grief, which include the following:

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

Each stage of your grief is important to acknowledge and experience. Your feelings are legitimate and need to be recognized and discussed, but they don't have to take over your life.

Depression and anxiety can start to overshadow everything else in your life. If you begin to experience feelings of sadness or emptiness that last for more than a few days and are coupled with mood swings or fatigue, you may be suffering from clinical depression. While you may try to dismiss these feelings or try to deal with them yourself, you should not be afraid to get yourself professional help. Your oncologist can discuss your depression and anxiety and if medication is right for you.

Talking to Someone Outside Your Family

Your family can be a great source of comfort as you process your feelings, but sometimes you need an outside perspective. You may have a good friend, minister, or workout partner who can listen to your concerns with an open mind.

Some mesothelioma patients find great comfort in joining a support group, either online or in-person. Sometimes talking to someone who is going through the same things you are can make all the difference.

Seeing a therapist can also help tremendously with your outlook on life. A professional will help you address and process your emotions and prescribe anti-depressant medications if you both feel they would help you.



DISCUSSING THE DIFFICULT ISSUES WITH YOUR FAMILY: LETTING THEM KNOW YOUR WISHES

SECTIONS

Discussing the
Difficult Issues
with Your Family:
Letting Them
Know Your Wishes

Infographic

With mesothelioma treatments constantly evolving research continually progressing, you may live years beyond the current statistics for the disease. However, mesothelioma is still incurable, so you may have to have challenging conversations with family about how you want your treatment handled and your wishes during this time. Making these decisions early helps relieve your family's stress later on.

Advanced Directives

Advanced directives are written forms that allow you to direct how you would like your medical care handled if you should become incapacitated. Executing these forms while you are still feeling well can provide you with the security of knowing that your wishes will be carried out. The following are common types of advanced directives for mesothelioma patients:

- **LIVING WILL**

A legal document that allows you to make decisions about your health care, such as if you want to be revived through cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or if you want your life to be sustained with a feeding or breathing tube and for how long.

- **POWER OF ATTORNEY**

If you would like to put your health care or financial decisions in the hands of a trusted family member, a power of attorney will allow you to transfer that authority. Then you will not need to worry about whether your affairs are being taken care of.

Almost everyone puts off making a will because facing mortality is often uncomfortable, but taking this action and making clear choices about your care and wishes can actually ease your and your loved one's worries.



LIVING WILL VS. POWER OF ATTORNEY

In simple terms, a Living Will is a legal document that clearly and explicitly states your wishes in regards to medical treatments and decisions. A Power of Attorney grants authority to someone you trust to act on your behalf.



WHAT ARE YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AFTER A MESOTHELIOMA DIAGNOSIS?

SECTIONS

What Are Your
Legal Rights After
a Mesothelioma
Diagnosis?

Filing a Claim

Trials in New York

If you have been diagnosed with mesothelioma due to asbestos exposure or you have lost a loved one to mesothelioma, you have the right to file a claim and pursue compensation for your losses. However, this process can be complex, especially with mesothelioma's long latency period. With the help of the experienced lawyers at The Williams Law Firm, P.C., you can better understand your rights and legal options while focusing on your treatment.

Filing a Claim

Mesothelioma claims aim to hold companies accountable for exposing workers and their loved ones to asbestos, which led to the aggressive cancer. Therefore, if you have been diagnosed with mesothelioma or lost a loved one from mesothelioma caused by asbestos exposure, you may file a claim to seek the justice and compensation you deserve. Our trusted lawyers can help you determine the best avenue for recovering compensation based on your unique circumstances. Common types of mesothelioma claims include the following:

- **PERSONAL INJURY**

If you developed mesothelioma due to asbestos exposure, you may file a personal injury claim to recover economic and non-economic damages.

- **WRONGFUL DEATH**

Loved ones of a mesothelioma patient may file this claim if they lost a family member from the rare disease.

- **TRUST FUND**

Asbestos trust funds provide compensation for mesothelioma patients and their loved ones, often set up by companies who have a large number of these cases.

- **WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

If you were exposed to asbestos at work, you may be eligible to file a workers' compensation claim because mesothelioma from asbestos exposure is often considered an occupational-related illness.

Your mesothelioma lawyer will file your claim with the appropriate entity depending on who was responsible for your asbestos exposure. Even if the company that made the asbestos products that exposed you to asbestos has filed for bankruptcy, you may be able to recover compensation from the court-ordered trust fund set up as part of that company's reorganization. An experienced mesothelioma attorney can guide you through the process for any of these claim types.



Trials in New York

While many mesothelioma claims end in settlements, some may need to go to trial. If pursuing

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litigation is the right choice to get you the compensation you need, you can file a claim in court against the company who is responsible for your exposure to asbestos and seek damages for your medical expenses, lost income, and pain and suffering.

For New York cases involving asbestos exposure, the court handles claims in an expedited legal process. Generally, the court will schedule trials for asbestos-related cancer within a year. Your case can be combined or “clustered” with other mesothelioma cases on the motion of your lawyer to speed up the process and reduce the stress on you and your family during the litigation. Your testimony may be taken at your home and preserved for trial.



KNOWING IF YOU HAVE A CASE AND WHEN TO FILE IT

SECTIONS

Knowing If You
Have a Case and
When to File It

Do You Have a
Claim?

Who You Can
Recover Damages
From

Statute of
Limitations

Talking with an experienced attorney who specializes in mesothelioma cases is the best way to find out if you have a claim, what it may be worth, and what steps you need to take to start the legal process.

Do You Have a Claim?

A mesothelioma diagnosis can be overwhelming, but understanding if you have a claim can be a major step towards justice and financial relief. At The Williams Law Firm, P.C., we can help you determine if you have a valid claim by exploring your asbestos exposure history, identifying responsible parties, navigating your legal options, and finding the answers to the following questions:

- Did the liable party have a responsibility to treat you or your loved one with reasonable care?
- Did they breach this duty by exposing you or your loved one to asbestos?
- Did this negligence directly cause your mesothelioma diagnosis?
- Has your mesothelioma diagnosis resulted in damages?

Many people are concerned once they receive a mesothelioma diagnosis that there will be no one to hold responsible and pay for their injury because the disease can take 20 to 50 years to present symptoms. However, thousands of victims of asbestos exposure have recovered compensation for their mesothelioma. Our dedicated lawyers handle every aspect of your case, so you can focus on your treatment with peace of mind that you are in the right hands.

Who You Can Recover Damages From

Depending on the specific details of your claim and who caused your asbestos exposure, you may recover compensation from a variety of courses, including the following:

- **MANUFACTURER OF THE ASBESTOS**

Asbestos manufacturers may be liable for your damages if they failed to warn about the dangers of the material.

- **INSTALLER OF THE ASBESTOS**

Whether your employer, contractor, or other party installed asbestos, they may be responsible for your losses if you were exposed and developed mesothelioma.

- **ASBESTOS VICTIMS' TRUST FUND**

Asbestos victims trust funds were established as a condition of bankruptcy protection for companies who made asbestos-containing products. To receive compensation from these funds, you must prove your illness was caused by asbestos exposure in the company's products.



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Whether the company responsible for your asbestos exposure is still in business or has filed for bankruptcy, we can help you file a claim, hold them accountable, and recover damages through the liable party or through an asbestos trust fund.

Statute of Limitations

Each state has a statute of limitations that states how long you have to file your mesothelioma claim, ranging from one to six years after the mesothelioma diagnosis. With these deadlines in place, it's important to immediately seek out advice on what type of claim to file to ensure you do not miss your opportunity to pursue compensation. Due to the aggressive nature of mesothelioma, consulting a trusted attorney as soon as possible after your diagnosis allows you to begin the process of getting the compensation you deserve while focusing on your treatment.



EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY AFTER ASBESTOS EXPOSURE

SECTIONS

Employer
Responsibility
after Asbestos
Exposure

On-the-Job
Protections

After-the-Job
Responsibilities

Every employer must inform workers about working with asbestos or in an environment with the risk of asbestos exposure. If you are concerned about asbestos exposure in your current workplace, talk with your employer or their designated health and safety representative to understand if they are taking appropriate precautions to prevent asbestos exposure and the development of mesothelioma. If you have been exposed to asbestos at work, talk to an experienced mesothelioma lawyer about your legal rights and entitlement to compensation.

On-the-Job Protections

The [Occupational Safety & Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#) regulates the safety measures employers should take with asbestos. In general, employers should provide the following protection for employees:

- Proper training for working with and around asbestos
- Monitoring of the exposure levels of employees
- Well ventilated workspace
- Protective clothing, like gloves and goggles
- Protective gear, like a respirator
- Warning signs on material containing asbestos, like raw materials, mixtures, and even waste

Employers are required to provide a safe working environment and limit employee exposure to dangerous materials like asbestos. If your employer fails to take the proper safety precautions and provide adequate training and materials, causing you to suffer asbestos exposure and develop mesothelioma, you may file a claim against them for their negligence.

After-the-Job Responsibilities

Employers can be found responsible for exposing employees to asbestos because it causes mesothelioma. However, because of the long latency period of mesothelioma, 30 or 40 years may have passed between exposure to asbestos and diagnosis of mesothelioma. Working with an experienced mesothelioma attorney can help you determine what entity or entities could be responsible for your injuries. Based on the facts of your case, you may be able to hold manufacturers of asbestos or asbestos containing products, building owners, contractors and other entities liable.

In some cases, you can go through the workers' compensation system for your state or seek payment from a mesothelioma victim's trust fund. We will investigate your specific situation and work with you to help secure maximum compensation.



WHAT IS A WRONGFUL DEATH CLAIM?

SECTIONS

What Is a Wrongful Death Claim?

What Wrongful Death Means

What Compensation Is Available for the Family?

Who Can File a Wrongful Death Claim?

Losing a family member to mesothelioma is a devastating experience no one should have to go through, especially because so many cases are preventable. If you lost a loved one to mesothelioma, you may file a wrongful death claim. This legal action allows surviving family members to recover compensation for their economic and non-economic losses and seek justice for their family.

What Wrongful Death Means

While losing a loved one for any reason feels wrong, wrongful death means you would not have lost a loved one if it weren't for someone else's negligence. In cases where a loved one succumbed to mesothelioma, they would have never had that cancer if they had not been exposed to asbestos at some point in their life, usually through their work.

Surviving family members may pursue legal action against the responsible parties, which may include one or more of the following:

- The manufacturer of the asbestos material
- Manufacturers that incorporated asbestos materials in their finished products
- A distributor of the asbestos material
- Contractors that worked with asbestos
- Owners of buildings where asbestos was present

Our efficient and detail-oriented mesothelioma lawyers will investigate your case, identify the liable party or parties, and gather evidence, such as medical records, maintenance records, and witness and expert testimony, to give you the best chance of achieving justice for your family.

What Compensation Is Available for the Family?

Losing a loved one to mesothelioma often leaves families with much more than grief. You may also face piling medical and funeral expenses, adding to the stress of this difficult time. With the guidance of a seasoned mesothelioma lawyer, you may recover the following damages when filing a claim:

- Medical costs
- Home care costs
- Funeral expenses
- Emotional distress
- Lost wages
- Lost benefits
- Loss of companionship



At The Williams Law Firm, P.C., we specialize in mesothelioma cases, so we can help you discuss your legal options and determine your claim's value, so you don't settle for a lowball offer. While we understand no amount of money can make losing a loved one any better, we can help you seek justice and relieve financial burdens.

Who Can File a Wrongful Death Claim?

Losing a loved one to mesothelioma can have an impact on your entire family. However, it's important to know many states only allow certain surviving family members to file wrongful death claims. For example, in [New York](#), the following parties can file a wrongful death lawsuit:

- The decedent's child
- The decedent's parent
- The decedent's spouse
- A personal representative of the decedent's estate

We can help you determine if you qualify to file a wrongful death claim in your state and what to expect during the complex legal process.



WHAT COMPENSATION CAN YOU RECEIVE FOR A MESOTHELIOMA DIAGNOSIS?

SECTIONS

What Compensation Can You Receive for a Mesothelioma Diagnosis?

Compensation You Can Recover

Asbestos Trust Funds

A mesothelioma diagnosis can be a heavy financial burden on you and your family. For many mesothelioma patients, one of their primary concerns is not draining the family resources, so their loved ones have enough money to carry on without worry. With the help of our experienced lawyers, you can file a claim and have the best chance of recovering maximum compensation, so you don't have to stress about leaving your family with steep medical bills.

Compensation You Can Recover

Depending on the severity of your mesothelioma, your unique needs, and treatment, you may recover the following damages:

- Medical expenses, including those that are not covered under health insurance
- Lost wages for time away from work and for future wages you won't have the opportunity to earn
- Costs incurred for travel to medical facilities for treatment
- Pain and suffering (for physical and mental distress)
- Support costs for you and your family's mental health
- Funeral expenses

Your loved ones will also be eligible for similar compensation if they file a wrongful death action after your passing or if you pass away during the litigation of your claim. We work closely with you and consider every detail when calculating your claim's value to ensure your compensation reflects the full scope of your physical, emotional, and financial damages.

Asbestos Trust Funds

Asbestos trust funds are accounts with large sums of money a bankrupt company has set aside to compensate asbestos exposure victims. Typically, asbestos manufacturers set up these accounts as part of the Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection to manage current and future asbestos claims. You may be able to file an asbestos trust fund claim if you fall into one of the following categories:

- Your employer exposed you to asbestos.
- You used asbestos-containing products.
- You lost a loved one due to an asbestos-related illness, like mesothelioma.



The Williams Law Firm, P.C. can help you determine if you qualify for asbestos trust funds and build a strong claim that proves the liable company or companies caused your asbestos exposure. If multiple companies are responsible for your asbestos exposure, we can help you file and manage multiple claims.

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Additionally, there are expedited and individual review options available for asbestos trust fund claims. Expedited review is done quickly and pays a predetermined amount set by the trust. Individual review takes longer but often results in higher payouts. We can help you determine which review process would be best for your situation.



RECORDS YOUR LAWYER WILL NEED FOR YOUR CASE

SECTIONS

Records Your
Lawyer Will Need
for Your Case

Work Records

Medical Records

In preparing your case, we investigate every element of your asbestos exposure, including when and how it happened and the details of your mesothelioma diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis. This process involves closely reviewing and analyzing your work and medical records.

Work Records

Knowing the jobs you had where you may have been exposed to asbestos and when you worked in those positions is crucial for identifying liable parties. Try to gather any records you still have from your previous employers before your first meeting with us. We understand this can be difficult because you have likely not worked at the liable company for over 20 years, but the smallest piece of information helps. Documents that can be useful for your attorney include the following:

- W-2 forms that show when and where you worked
- Tax filings with the state or the IRS
- Documentation from your employer regarding asbestos exposure
- List of potential witnesses who can verify the asbestos exposure in your job
- Union information about your work environment
- Military records

If you do not have this documentation on hand, we can make information requests on your behalf during our investigation. The more information you can provide up front, the better we can understand the strength of your claim and the amount of compensation you may receive.

Medical Records

While your work records help us determine the liability portion of your case, your medical records help us prove your diagnosis how much your treatment will cost. From your first visit to the doctor where you complained of mesothelioma symptoms to the mountain of bills for your treatment, each piece of your medical history will paint the picture of how severely this disease has interrupted your life.



HOW YOU CAN AFFORD TO HAVE YOUR CLAIM INVESTIGATED, FILED, AND REPRESENTED BY AN EXPERIENCED ATTORNEY

SECTIONS

How You Can
Afford to Have
Your Claim
Investigated, Filed,
and Represented
by an Experienced
Attorney

Contingency Fee

Free Consultation

Almost every mesothelioma patient and their family are concerned about money, with unexpected medical bills piling up. You may think paying an attorney to help you file a claim is beyond your means, but it is not. The Williams Law Firm, P.C. is here to help you seek the justice you and your family deserve without the financial stress.

Contingency Fee

At The Williams Law Firm, P.C., we work on a contingency fee basis. This means that you do not pay a fee up front, and you do not pay for our services at an hourly rate. Instead, you do not have to pay us unless we win your case.

If your case is unsuccessful and we cannot recover compensation with your legal action, then you do not owe us a legal fee. We believe in fighting for the rights of victims of asbestos exposure, so we dedicate ourselves to fully investigating the claim for each client we represent and making the best legal arguments we can to ensure you get the compensation you need and deserve.

Free Consultation

In addition to our contingency fee, we offer free consultations to all mesothelioma patients. You can meet with our lead attorney, Joseph P. Williams, and our team free-of-charge to discuss the merits of your case. You are under no obligation to hire our firm for representation after this consultation.

During your consultation, we discuss your medical history, the history of your exposure to asbestos, and the potential legal options to recover compensation for your mesothelioma. Our team can answer any questions you have about your case and can walk you through what the legal process would look like for you and your family. With this information, you can make the best decision for your future.



WHY YOU MAY NEED A LAWYER AND HOW TO CHOOSE ONE

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When you are fighting for compensation for injuries that stem from events that occurred a quarter or a half century ago, it can feel like an uphill battle. Having an experienced mesothelioma attorney on your side fighting for you can be the critical factor that helps you get the full compensation that you deserve.

DO YOU NEED A LAWYER?

Mesothelioma diagnosis can be overwhelming and emotional for you and your family, leaving you unsure about next steps. A mesothelioma lawyer can alleviate the stress of the legal process and provide the financial assistance you need while you focus on fighting cancer.

Investigating your claim and proving your case on your own can be costly and time consuming. Our experienced attorneys know the right resources to thoroughly investigate your claim without wasting the precious time you have.

How to Choose Your Mesothelioma Attorney

Choosing a mesothelioma attorney can be a difficult decision, but when you know the qualities to look for, you can make the right choice for you and your family. These qualities include the following:

- Experienced with mesothelioma and asbestos-related cases
- Knowledgeable about mesothelioma and the effects it has on you
- Knowledgeable about the 3,000 or more products that contained asbestos in the United States and that you may have been exposed to asbestos from
- Knowledgeable and experienced in the local court system where your case could be filed
- Able to evaluate the merits of your case and provide information about your potential compensation
- Willing to travel to your home at any point if you can't make it to their office

When looking for an attorney, meeting them in person ensures you feel comfortable and confident with the kind of representation you will get. Asking questions and seeing if the attorney takes the time to address your concerns gives you valuable insight into their approach, the care they put into every aspect of your claim, and their ability to communicate openly and honestly.



Legal Guidance Beyond Mesothelioma Claims

Our team's dedication at the Williams Law Firm, P.C. goes beyond your mesothelioma claim. We strive to provide the support you need during aspect of your treatment, including the following:

- **Creating advance directives:** Living wills, power of attorney, and other legal documents to express end-of-life wishes can provide much-needed stress relief for you and your family.
- **Funeral and burial planning:** Losing a loved one to mesothelioma is heartbreaking, so we provide compassionate guidance for planning memorials, understanding cremation vs. burial, and discussing final wishes with family.
- **Estate planning essentials:** We can review the basics of wills, trusts, and probate to help you ensure your assets are managed according to their wishes.
- **Guardianship and dependents:** If you have children or dependents, we can help you navigate legal complexities, including custody planning and government support options.

With these high-quality, personalized comprehensive services and our proven track record of success, you can trust us to fight for your rights, no matter how complex or high-value your case.



WHY CHOOSE THE WILLIAMS LAW FIRM, P.C.?

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ABOUT JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Our lead attorney, Joseph P. Williams, is an accomplished mesothelioma attorney with a national reputation for championing the rights of asbestos exposure victims and their families. Mr. Williams is based in New York City and also represents clients throughout the United States.

REPRESENTATION WITH COMPASSION

As a dedicated, long-time advocate of victims of asbestos exposure and their families, Mr. Williams understands the challenges you and your family face after a mesothelioma diagnosis. Our whole team is committed to providing each client personalized, aggressive representation that gives the best chance of a successful outcome.

However, Joe Williams does more than just represent you. He listens to your story and gives you the honest truth about your case, including the compensation you can expect to receive with a legal action. Regardless of where you live, we will travel to your home to meet with you and evaluate your case.

He works tirelessly to reduce your financial stress by getting you the monetary award you need to pay all of the unexpected medical and other expenses that came with your diagnosis. He wants you to be able to dedicate your precious time and energy to your family and your battle against this aggressive disease.

Mr. Williams is admitted to practice in all New York State courts, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern Districts of New York, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and the U.S. Supreme Court. He is also a contributor to the American Cancer Society and the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation.

EXPERIENCE YOU CAN TRUST

Mr. Williams has over 30 years of experience as an advocate representing victims in front of juries. He has been a champion for working people and their families, helping them recover much-needed compensation for their injuries. As the lead trial attorney for major New York City law firms, Mr. Williams has fought for justice for victims of workplace negligence in hundreds of jury cases.

Mesothelioma cases are often clustered together for a group trial, and Mr. Williams has successfully tried more than a dozen clustered mesothelioma cases that consisted of up to ten individual claimants in trial against as many as 50 different defendants at the same time. He has been instrumental in getting hundreds of millions of dollars for people suffering from mesothelioma and other asbestos-related illnesses.

At The Williams Law Firm, P.C., we have proudly represented mesothelioma patients and their families for over 30 years. No measure is too great and no task is too difficult if it helps you deal with the devastating diagnosis. At our firm, we know this is a time when you need help most as you cope with mesothelioma and its effects on your life. Everything we do is rooted in making the legal process as simple and stress-free as possible, so you don't feel a legal burden in addition to your medical treatment.

We take a personalized approach, taking the time to listen to your story and develop a legal plan based on your unique needs and circumstances. Our lead attorney, Joe Williams, will meet with you personally in your home to work on your case, so you don't have to worry about dealing with a young, inexperienced lawyer directed by their boss. We do not take the responsibility of handling your claim lightly, so you can rest assured you are more than just a number when working with us.