

Asbestos

CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CENTER at the
MOUNT SINAI INSTITUTE FOR EXPOSOMIC RESEARCH

Asbestos is a group of natural fibers banned in some products in the U.S. due to its harmful health effects, including cancer.

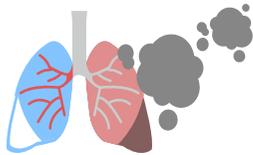
Before the 1980s asbestos was used in many building products.

Asbestos can be released into the air during demolition, renovation, or maintenance. Fibers can be brought home on clothing by those in certain jobs, especially construction.



Breathing in asbestos is harmful.

Asbestos-related diseases, such as cancers and lung scarring, can take decades to develop.



The health risk of a small, brief exposure to asbestos is extremely low.

It is important that anyone exposed to asbestos avoid tobacco smoke. Tobacco smoke multiplies the risk for lung cancer in a person also exposed to asbestos.

Asbestos exposure can be prevented.

If you think your home has asbestos, have an asbestos-certified inspector evaluate and recommend next steps (encapsulate, remove). If work needs to be done, hire a licensed contractor to deal with the asbestos in a safe way.



Never let children play where asbestos is exposed or near renovation or demolition work.



Avoid use of talcum-based powders and cosmetics due to the small risk of contamination with asbestos fibers.



Anyone who works with asbestos material (construction/demolition, firefighting, shipyard worker) should be careful not to carry any asbestos home with them – showering, and changing clothes and shoes are important steps before going home.



Schools are required to have asbestos management plans, and address asbestos under strict federal regulations (called AHERA). You can request to review your school's asbestos plan.

