

WHAT TO DO AFTER A MESOTHELIOMA DIAGNOSIS:

Asbestos Exposure And Your Rights

If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with mesothelioma, you know you are in for many difficult days ahead. While there is no cure for mesothelioma, there are steps you can take now to care for yourself, provide for your family's future and prepare for what lies ahead. First, it is important for you to know what you are facing.

A WHITE PAPER PRESENTED BY

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What is Mesothelioma?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that is made up of microscopic fibers that become airborne when disturbed. When inhaled, these fibers become permanently lodged in the cells of your organs, most commonly your lungs, heart or other organs in the abdomen. Over time, the tissue touching the fibers becomes irritated and, eventually, causes permanent scarring. This scarring is what leads to cancer.

Exposure to asbestos is the number one cause of malignant mesothelioma, also known simply as mesothelioma. Mesothelioma is a rare and lethal cancer in the mesothelium – a lining made up of specialized cells that covers most of your internal organs and lines the inside of your chest. Once mesothelioma takes root, these cells become cancerous and quickly develop into deadly tumors.



Mesothelioma can start in four different areas of the body leading to four differently named cancers, which are :

- **Pleural mesothelioma:**

This type of malignant mesothelioma affects the lining of the lungs or the chest wall, and it is the type that about 75 percent of victims have.

- **Peritoneal mesothelioma:**

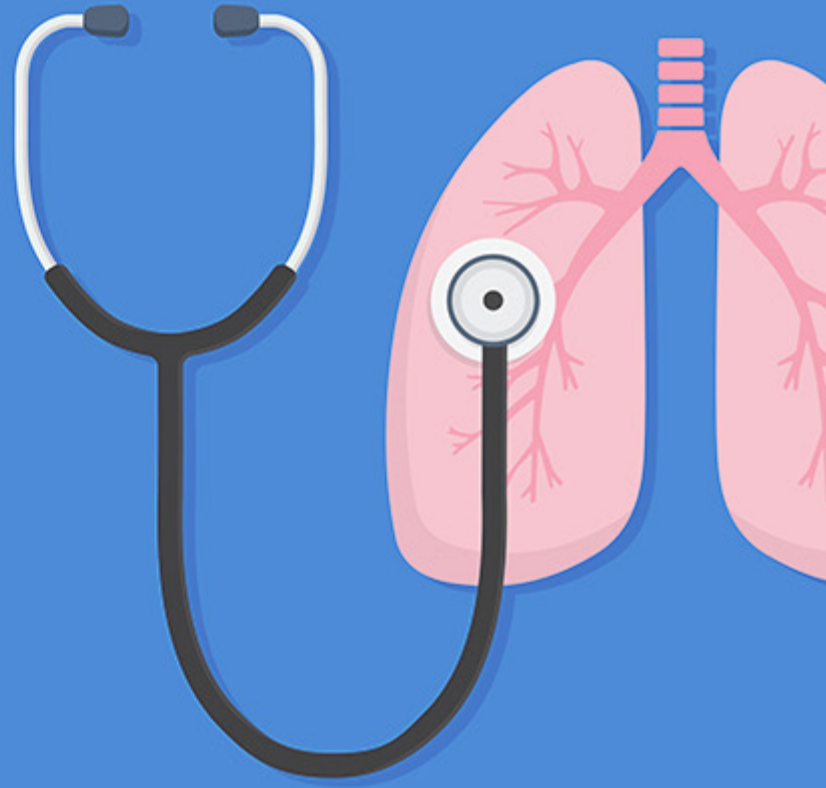
This cancer starts in the abdomen and is the second most common type of mesothelioma.

- **Pericardial mesothelioma:**

This affects the lining around the heart and is a very rare type of mesothelioma.

- **Testicular mesothelioma:**

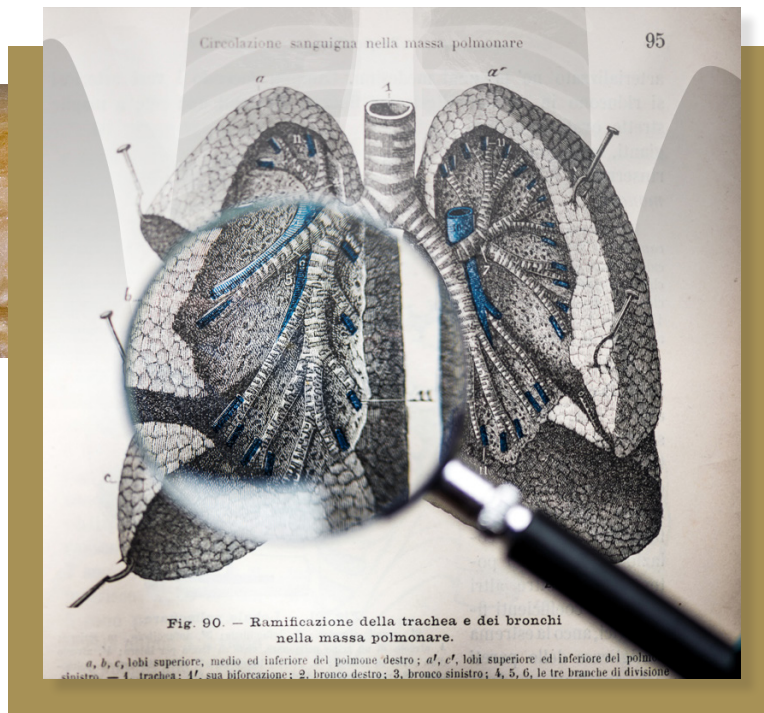
This type is also very rare and affects the lining of the testicles.



Mesothelioma is an aggressive type of cancer. The average life expectancy for victims typically ranges from four months to two years, although some victims survive for several years after their symptoms first appear.

How did I get mesothelioma?

Any level of exposure to asbestos can lead to an asbestos-related disease, including mesothelioma. Asbestos was widely used in a variety of industries from 1940 to the mid-1970s. People who were exposed during that time are being diagnosed with mesothelioma now because the disease lays dormant and often rears its ugly head 10 to 50 years later.



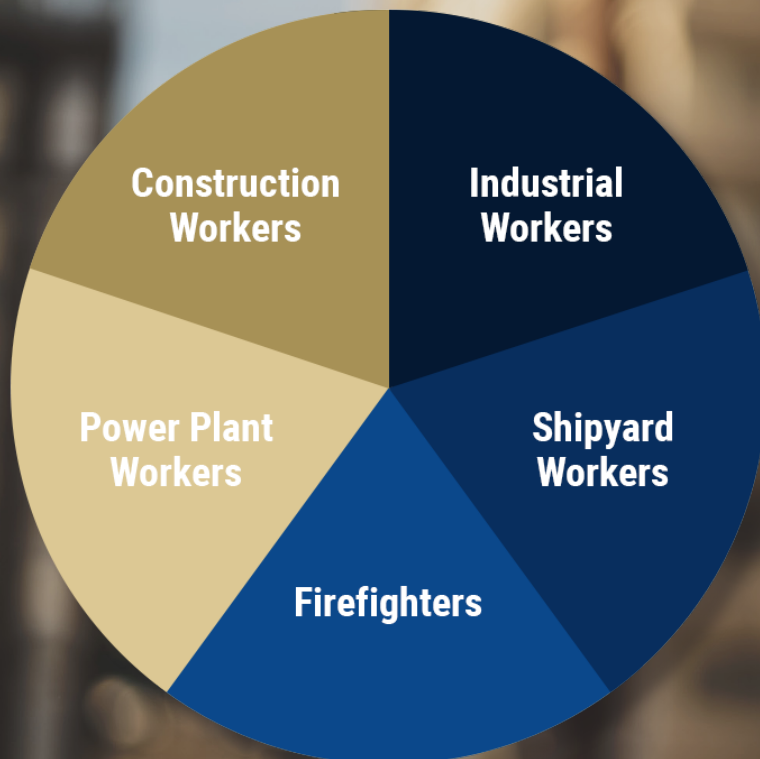
Whether your exposure leads to cancer or not depends on your individual immune system. It is not clear why some people who were heavily exposed don't get cancer and why others who had minimal exposure contract this terminal illness.

Who is at risk of getting mesothelioma?

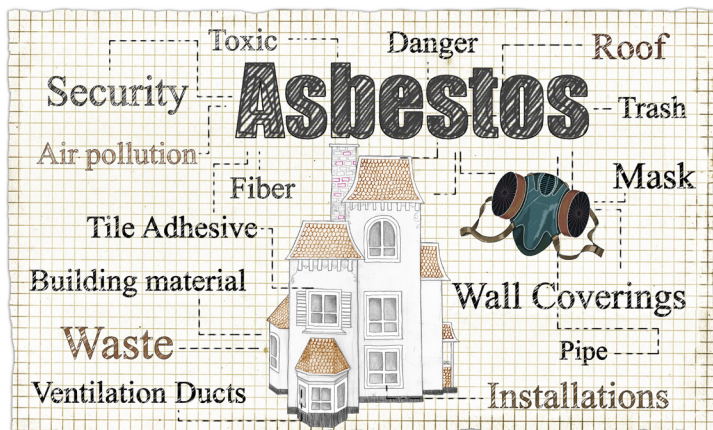
Most mesothelioma victims have worked on jobsites where they were exposed to asbestos fibers. Certain industries expose their workers to much higher levels of asbestos than others. These include:

- **Commercial construction**
- **Shipbuilding**
- **Steel and iron milling**
- **Railroad**
- **Auto manufacturing**
- **Mining**
- **Metal casting**
- **And many others**

Workers in these high-risk industries are the primary victims of mesothelioma. Foundry workers are in the most danger; steel workers, laborers, those in skilled trades, mechanics, plumbers, pipefitters, welders and construction workers of all types are also in risky occupations. Military personnel are also at a high risk of contracting asbestos-related illnesses, especially those who served in the Coast Guard, the Navy or the Merchant Marines.



Modern day firefighters are also in a high-risk occupation. Structures built decades ago contain asbestos, a naturally heat-resistant and insulating substance. While battling fires in older homes and commercial buildings, high concentrations of asbestos fibers can be released.



Dangers don't just exist in the workplace. Some victims have been exposed to asbestos fibers in their own homes. Workers can unknowingly carry the asbestos fibers home on their clothes, exposing family members.

What are the signs and symptoms of mesothelioma?

After exposure to asbestos, it may take decades for mesothelioma to develop. If you were exposed to asbestos in the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s at your job, your symptoms may only be starting now. Symptoms and signs of mesothelioma can be similar to other illnesses. If you or a close family member worked in a high-risk occupation, make sure your doctor knows when you go in for a checkup.



Symptoms vary according to the type of mesothelioma you have.

- Cancer in your chest (pleural mesothelioma) may cause shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, pain in your chest, low back or under your ribs, a bad cough or hoarseness among other symptoms.
- Abdominal (peritoneal) mesothelioma can cause pain or swelling in your belly, constipation or nausea and vomiting.
- Pericardial (heart) mesothelioma may cause shortness of breath, chest pain or an irregular heartbeat or heart murmur.
- Swelling or a lump is often the first sign of testicular mesothelioma.

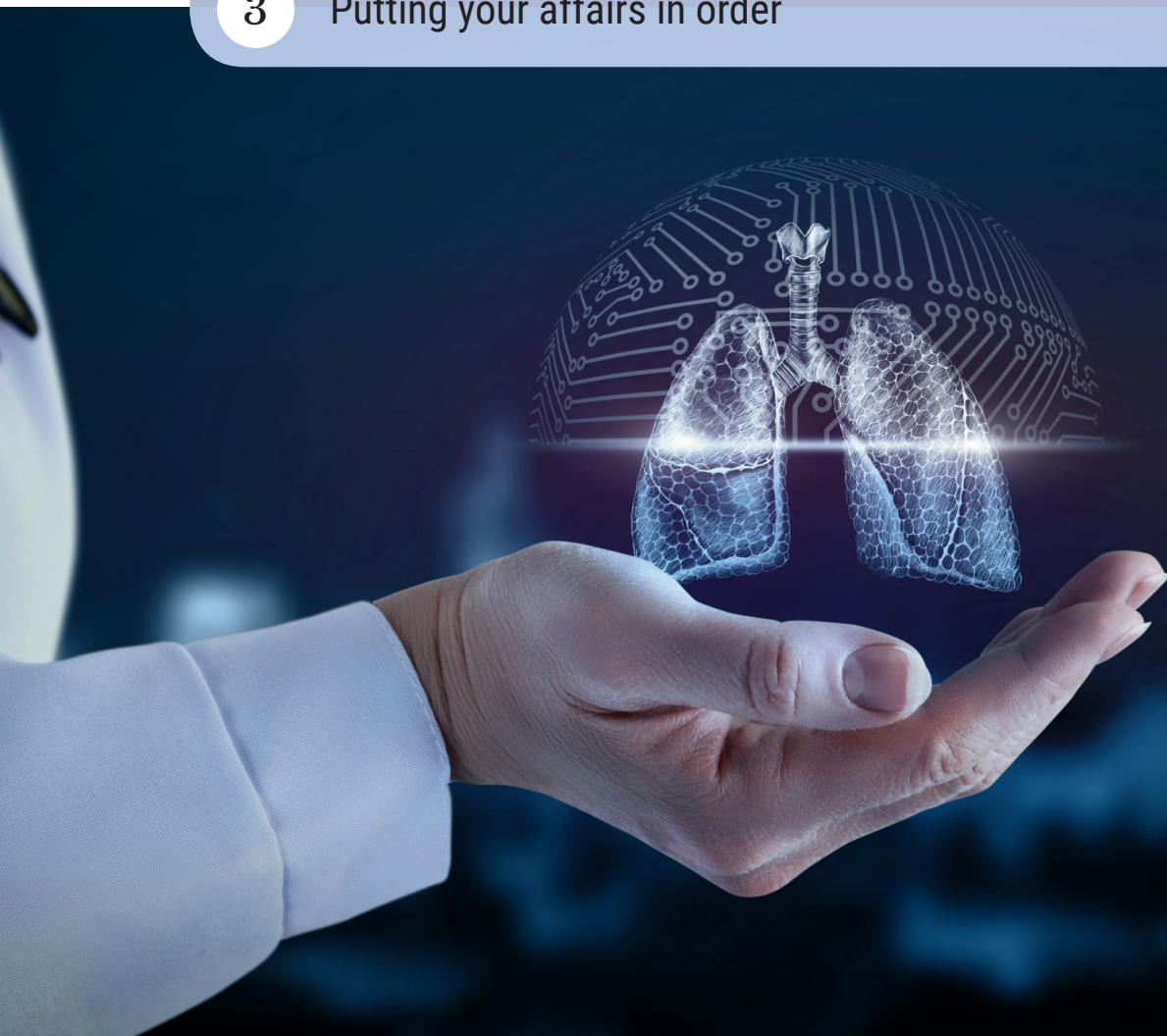
Symptoms that are common to all types of mesothelioma includeⁱⁱ:

- Unintentional weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Fever or excessive sweating
- Unusual lumps

I have been diagnosed with mesothelioma: What do I do next?

The world does not stop revolving after you are diagnosed with a terminal illness; it just feels like it. Fight back by taking actions that will not only help you with your physical and emotional needs but also help your loved ones with theirs. These steps include:

- 1 Getting proper medical care
- 2 Learning about your financial options
- 3 Putting your affairs in order



What kind of medical treatment is available?

As with any serious illness, it is important to seek the highest quality medical treatment you can find. Mesothelioma takes down its victims quickly, which means you need to act quickly as well.

Surgery, chemotherapy and radiation are the most common courses of treatment. New treatment options are also surfacing as medical professionals work to ease the symptoms for mesothelioma victims and strive to find a cure. Blood tests may help your doctor identify a personalized treatment plan that works best for you. A Google search points out developing treatment options, such as:

- **Immunotherapy to boost your immune system**
- **Cryoablation, which freezes the cancerous cells**
- **Medical marijuana to ease painful symptoms and increase your appetite**
- **Post-surgery vaccine to keep the cancer at bay**
- **Photodynamic therapy, which uses light to kill cancer cells missed by chemo**
- **Virotherapy and gene therapy, which both involve injecting genetically engineered viruses that fight the cancerous cells while leaving healthy cells alone**

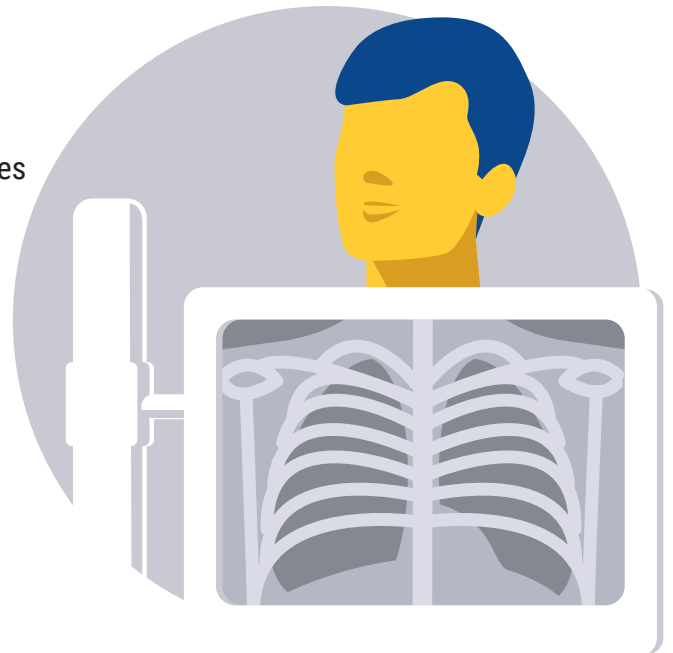
Getting and paying for your medical treatment should be two separate issues, but they are often intertwined. If you are unable to afford treatment, you may not get the care you need. A lawyer can help you with this pressing issue.



How can an attorney help me and my family?

Lawyers can't cure you of your illness or make you feel physically better. However, an attorney's job is to make those who are to blame for your illness provide you with monetary compensation that can make your life easier. While you wouldn't trade your health for a million dollars, money can:

- Help you get the medical treatment and palliative care you need
- Provide financial stability to those you leave behind – your wife, children and other loved ones
- Compensate you for your pain and suffering
- Give you peace of mind about the future and the futures of your family members
- Make your remaining time more comfortable





Why should I choose Kelley & Ferraro, LLP?

When you have a terminal disease, you don't have a lot of time. The law firm of Kelley & Ferraro, LLP, will get you the most money in the least amount of time. Our trial attorneys have been handling legal claims for mesothelioma victims and their families in Ohio and throughout the country since 1997. We understand the challenges you are facing and sympathize with you and your loved ones during this difficult time.

Mesothelioma cases cannot be handled by just any lawyer. This is a specialized area of law. Using a team approach, we make it possible for you to battle the big companies that are responsible for your disease. Our good reputation and results for our clients prove we know what we are doing. In fact, we have obtained nearly \$1 billion for our clients.

Talking to us about your options is not something you can put off. There is a deadline known as the "statute of limitations" that determines the time limit you have for filing a lawsuit. That time begins to toll when you are first diagnosed or when you first become aware that your disease was caused by your job or work duties. The deadline varies from state to state but is typically limited to one, two or three years.



Let's get started: A review of the claim process

Determining who is responsible for your asbestos exposure is the first step in the claim process. Those responsible typically include manufacturers and distributors of materials and products that contain asbestos. If we can prove that your employer knew of the dangers, your employer may also be to blame for your losses. This step can be very difficult as your symptoms may not appear for decades.



Was asbestos in products or materials you worked with?

Next, we will determine whether your current illness was caused by being around or working with those products or materials.



Did the type of work you did 30, 40 or maybe 50 years ago cause your cancer?

If the answers to these questions are yes, filing a lawsuit is usually next on the agenda.

Product Liability Lawsuits

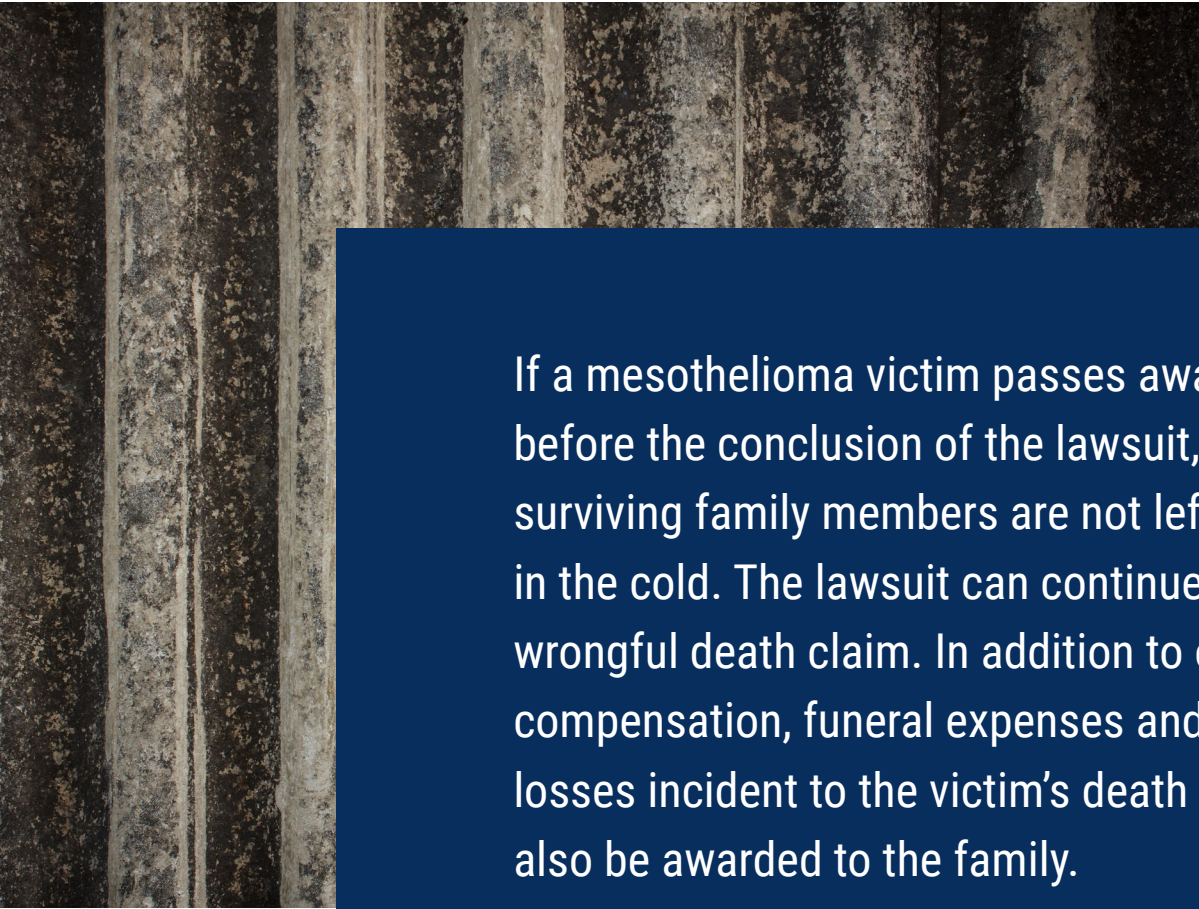
The type of lawsuit needed is typically a product liability claim that seeks answers to these questions:

- *Was the product that contained asbestos improperly designed so that those who worked around it were exposed?*
- *Did the manufacture and distributor fail to warn of the potential dangers of working around asbestos?*

GETTING STARTED



Many asbestos companies filed bankruptcy because of the numerous asbestos claims against them. This means that these companies cannot be sued directly. In these cases, we will also file a claim against a mesothelioma trust fund. This trust fund was established by the bankruptcy court system. When successful claims are made, the trust makes payments to victims instead of the companies who claim bankruptcy protection.



If a mesothelioma victim passes away before the conclusion of the lawsuit, surviving family members are not left out in the cold. The lawsuit can continue as a wrongful death claim. In addition to other compensation, funeral expenses and other losses incident to the victim's death may also be awarded to the family.

Contact The Trial Lawyers of Kelley & Ferraro today to learn about your options

Contact us now for a free, no-obligation consultation with our trial lawyers.
Call us at **888-839-8479** or send us an email.

Your claim will be handled on a contingency basis. This means you pay no attorney fees unless we win your case. Please don't wait. You don't have to suffer alone. Let us help you face your future with peace about what comes next.

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SOURCES

ⁱ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/malignant-mesothelioma/about/malignant-mesothelioma.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/malignant-mesothelioma/detection-diagnosis-staging/signs-symptoms.html>
and <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mesothelioma/symptoms-causes/syc-20375022>