

Asbestosis

A guide to compensation for asbestos related illness, asbestosis

Expert advice

Being diagnosed with asbestosis can be both shocking and devastating news for the person diagnosed and their family. Having specialised in cases of asbestosis for many years, Slater and Gordon understand just how much life can change at this time and it's our aim to make the claims process as easy as possible for everyone concerned.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a mineral that has been mined for hundreds of years and was used due to its fireproof qualities. There are three common types of asbestos which are Chrysotile (white), Amosite (brown) and Crocidolite (blue).

Where might exposure to asbestos take place?

Asbestos was once used everywhere. It was used at home, in schools and other public places. Most people who develop an asbestos related illness were exposed to asbestos many years ago whilst working in professions such as:

- engineers
- plumbers
- joiners
- ladders
- dockyard workers

and could be found in places such as:

- lagging on pipework and boilers
- artex and ceiling tiles
- fire proof insulation
- linoleum floor tiles
- panels, boards and partitions

What is asbestosis?

Asbestosis is a form of scarring of the lungs caused by a large amount of exposure to asbestos dust.

Scarring, also known as fibrosis, makes it difficult for the lungs to work effectively, which can cause mild to severe breathlessness.



What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of asbestosis do not usually develop until many years after exposure to asbestos dust. However, if symptoms do develop, they may include shortness of breath, fatigue and persistent coughing.

How is asbestosis diagnosed?

If an x-ray shows some shadowing, the chest consultant may arrange for you to have a CT Scan which takes pictures of the inside of the body and provides much more information.

There are some conditions which look similar on an x-ray to asbestosis and therefore the consultant would take a history of your asbestos exposure before making a diagnosis of asbestosis.

Is there treatment available for asbestosis?

Many people think that asbestosis is cancer. It's not. There is a risk that people suffering from asbestosis may go on to develop either lung cancer or mesothelioma.

Regular monitoring through x-rays and lung function tests will show progression, and if the disease does progress, treatment such as steroids or oxygen may be offered.

Advice on making a claim for compensation

For those who don't have experience of the legal process, contacting a lawyer and making a claim for compensation can be a daunting prospect. However, we're with our clients every step of the way, ensuring they understand the claims process, and relieving the burden of having to deal with a variety of practical issues, at what can be a difficult time.



What should you do if you think you have a claim?

Contact us. Our team of specialists have a vast amount of experience in dealing with asbestos related illnesses such as asbestosis, and have been involved in some of the most important and ground-breaking cases.

Once we've taken details, we'll confirm whether or not you have a claim. If you're entitled to compensation, we can start work on your case straightaway and begin gathering evidence. Time limits apply when making a claim for compensation, so don't delay in contacting us.

What is the cost of making a claim?

We understand that the cost of legal advice can be a worry, but there are options available to fund injury claims.

You may have legal expenses insurance under an existing insurance policy which entitles you to free representation. If legal expenses insurance is not in place, we can conduct your case under a Conditional Fee Agreement, also known as a 'No Win, No Fee' Agreement. This means if the case fails, no payment is due.

Once we know the circumstances of your claim, we'll be able to discuss your funding options in more detail.

What is the amount of compensation likely to be?

Compensation is based on your personal circumstances and our aim is to put you in the same financial position that you were in before the onset of your condition. Compensation is awarded for pain and suffering to reflect the nature and severity of the case, together with any financial losses.

Where the employer admits fault, it may be possible to get an interim payment (a payment which is made before the case reaches settlement).

Frequently asked questions

Will I have to go to court?

It's very rare that a case of asbestosis will continue to trial. A large majority of cases settle before a trial takes place.

However, if the case does not settle before trial, attendance at court may be necessary.

Can I claim compensation if my employer has gone out of business?

Don't worry if the company has gone out of business. It's often still possible to trace their insurers. Our Industrial Disease team has unrivalled expertise in tracing insurance providers of companies which have been out of business for many years.

We often take over cases and succeed in tracing the company's insurers, where other firms have failed.

What if the sufferer has passed away?

A claim can still be made by the Estate's legal representative (the person named as Executor in the Will if there is one) or otherwise by a family member.

What if there's an inquest?

An Inquest can be a daunting prospect for a bereaved family. We have a team of specialist lawyers with a vast amount of experience in representing families at Inquests.

They can guide families through the process and ensure all their questions are addressed with empathy and understanding and that the events are investigated thoroughly.

What if I need assistance in other areas?

We have expert lawyers in many areas of law such as family, employment, welfare benefits, trusts, and disability rights and work closely with those departments to ensure that you get the best possible outcome.