

Occupational Cancer

A guide to compensation for work related cancer

Expert advice

Cancer is one of the most common illnesses in the UK and causes thousands of deaths every year. There are many causes of cancer which can be difficult to identify. However, some cancers are caused by chemicals and dusts which you are exposed to at work. These cancers include cancer of the lungs, bladder, nasal passage and skin.

As they take a long time to develop, you could develop cancer many years after you were exposed to the dangerous substances.

Slater and Gordon has a team of experts who specialise in occupational cancer cases and will be able to provide the advice and service to ensure you get the best possible result to your case.



Lung cancer

Causes

Smoking is often considered to be the cause of lung cancer. However, there are substances which can cause lung cancer such as asbestos, carcinogenic chemicals, dust and radiation.

Symptoms

Symptoms which are attributed to lung cancer include an ongoing cough, shortness of breath, phlegm with signs of blood, pain when breathing or coughing, loss of appetite, weight loss and fatigue.

Nasal cancer

Causes

Smoking significantly increases the risk of developing nasal cancer. However, exposure to various substances in the workplace can also cause nasal cancer, such as wood dust (particularly hard wood dust), glues, formaldehyde, solvents (used in furniture and shoe production), nickel dust and chromium dust.

Symptoms

Symptoms which are attributed to nasal cancer include stuffiness in one side of the nose, nosebleeds, no sense of smell and mucus coming from the nose. You can also develop problems with your eyes such as bulging of one eye, complete or partial loss of sight, double vision, pain above or below the eye and watery eyes.

Bladder cancer

Causes

Bladder cancer can be caused when substances are inhaled, ingested or splashed onto the skin, as they travel through the bloodstream and into the kidneys where they are flushed out into the urine in the bladder. These substances include rubber, dyes, textiles, plastics and chemicals.

Symptoms

Symptoms which are attributed to bladder cancer include urinating more frequently, pain / burning sensation when passing urine, pelvic or bone pain, weight loss and swelling of the legs.

Skin cancer

Causes

The most well known cause of skin cancer is exposure to UV rays. However, skin cancer can also be caused by radiation and certain other chemicals in the workplace which include coal tar, soot, pitch, asphalt, creosols, paraffin wax, petroleum, cutting oils and arsenic.

Symptoms

Symptoms which are attributed to skin cancer include a spot or sore that does not heal, a spot or sore that continues to itch, hurt, crust or bleed and areas where the skin has broken down or formed an ulcer with no obvious cause.

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 industrial illnesses such as occupational cancer.

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 straight-away 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 may be able to 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 will be based on the severity of your illness, and also on your personal circumstances. For example, if you've been unable to work as a result of your illness, loss of earnings may be accounted for. If you were responsible for household chores or caring for a dependent and are no longer able to, the cost of assistance will be taken into account.

How long is the case likely to take?

Every case is different so it's difficult to estimate how long a case is likely to take without first reviewing the circumstances. However, the case will be dealt with by an expert in occupational cancer who will deal with the case as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Frequently asked questions

Will I have to go to court?

A large majority of cases settle before a trial takes place. However, if the case doesn't 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 illness team has unrivalled expertise in tracing the insurers 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.

Will I have to attend a medical appointment?

If we advise you that we're able to pursue a claim for occupational cancer on your behalf, you'll have to attend an independent medical appointment in order for us to obtain a report as part of your evidence.

What if I've lost a loved one due to occupational cancer?

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 I need assistance in other areas?

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