

While individual juries may find the discovery of an illness some time other than at diagnosis, it is likely that in most cases diagnosis will indicate discovery.

To Tables 2.3 and 2.4 we can add the estimated number of asbestosis cases in the 14 industries. There were no studies found during the course of our analysis which determined an overall incidence rate for asbestosis. Only rates for a few specific occupations have been determined. One cannot just add an estimate for asbestosis cases to the lung cancer and mesothelioma cases. This procedure would result in double accounting. As we saw in section 2.2.1, 50 percent of people certified as showing asbestosis died of or with lung cancer. Therefore asbestosis cases should equal twice the number of lung cancer cases. Table 2.3 shows 54,766 lung and mesothelioma cases estimated to occur between 1977 and 1995. But there is no evidence that mesothelioma and asbestosis are related, therefore mesothelioma cases must be removed from the 54,766 cases.

As we have also seen in section 2.2.2, lung cancer deaths occur in approximately 20-25 percent of all deaths of asbestos workers, and mesothelioma deaths in 7-10 percent of all deaths of asbestos workers, a ratio of approximately 3 lung cancer deaths to 1 mesothelioma death.

Using this relationship we can approximately separate the lung cancer cases from the mesothelioma cases and determine the total asbestosis cases, independent of cases where lung cancer and asbestosis appear together.

Number of asbestosis cases: = .75 times total lung and
mesothelioma cases times 2

Using this formula we derive approximately 82,000 asbestosis cases between 1977 and 1995. But 50 percent of these asbestosis cases would also have lung cancer, therefore the estimated number of cases