

Asbestos exposure can lead to various respiratory illnesses including [mesothelioma](#), a painful type of lung cancer. These are debilitating illnesses that can leave you unable to work, unable to take care of your family, and unable to enjoy your day-to-day life. And of course, these illnesses are often fatal.

If you're suffering from mesothelioma or another asbestos-related illness, you may be entitled to compensation. You will need to prove that you were exposed to asbestos in order to get the compensation you need. Asbestos cases are incredibly complex, but a [North Carolina asbestos lawyer](#) can help you get a positive result.

Industries at Risk for Asbestos-Related Illnesses

Asbestos was used in thousands of different products throughout the 20th century, especially in the construction and building industries. While any exposure to asbestos could potentially lead to asbestos-related lung diseases, there are some industries that had more exposure than others and therefore have a higher incidence of illnesses:

- [Shipbuilding](#) industry and shipyard workers
- Industrial workers
- Firefighters
- [Power plant workers](#)
- Construction workers

Although many types of asbestos have been banned in the United States since the 1980s, it's important to remember that asbestos-related illnesses may not manifest themselves until 20 to 50 years after exposure. As a result, you may be at risk for mesothelioma or other respiratory diseases even if you haven't worked with or been exposed to asbestos in decades.

How Asbestos Cases Are Unique

Most personal injury cases involve a single incident, are based on a single legal theory, and involve a single defendant. Asbestos cases, on the other hand, are usually the result of prolonged exposure to asbestos. In addition, an asbestos claim may involve a [personal injury claim](#), a [product liability claim](#), and a [workers' compensation claim](#). To further complicate matters, you may have to pursue multiple corporate defendants in an asbestos case.

Asbestos cases are extraordinarily difficult to pursue on your own. In order to get the compensation you are entitled to, you should work with an experienced North Carolina asbestos lawyer. They can guide you through the complexities of your case and help you understand your options.

Proving Asbestos Exposure

In order to pursue an asbestos-related claim, the first thing you need to prove is that you were exposed to asbestos. Most asbestos exposure comes through inhaling it, but it can also be ingested by swallowing it. Because exposure is cumulative and could have occurred a very long time ago, demonstrating that you are suffering from mesothelioma or another asbestos-related illness is enough to initially establish that you have been exposed to asbestos.

Some people worked with asbestos for years and yet have experienced no adverse health effects. If you know you have been exposed, you should inform your doctor and get routine examinations. However, it is important to note that you must be suffering from an asbestos-related illness in order to pursue a claim.

But Where and When Were You Exposed?

The fact that you are suffering from an asbestos-related illness is not sufficient to receive compensation. The next step, and a crucial hurdle, is determining where and when you were exposed to asbestos. This is a necessary step in identifying the companies responsible for your illness.

Most people can identify their employer and the worksite when they believe they were exposed. Even though this may have occurred decades ago, a knowledgeable North Carolina asbestos lawyer should have access to databases containing known employers and job sites around the country where asbestos was used.

Did Your Employer Fail to Protect You?

If your employer was aware of potential exposure to asbestos, they had an obligation to make a reasonable effort to protect you. This could include providing safety equipment, training employees concerning safe handling procedures, and assessing the potential risk of exposure. If they were aware of the risk and failed to take steps to protect you, they

may be held liable for your illness.

Different Types of Claims

What you have to prove may also shape what kind of claim you have to pursue. For example, you could pursue a workers' compensation claim if you can prove that you are now suffering from an asbestos-related injury as a result of your employment. You can pursue a workers' compensation claim even though you cannot prove that your employer was at fault. The disadvantage to a workers' comp claim, however, is that workers' compensation benefits will not cover all of your losses.

Alternatively, you may pursue a claim against the manufacturer of the product that contained asbestos. Product liability cases require proving that the manufacturer was negligent. That negligence can include the manufacturer having knowledge of the hazards of asbestos but failing to provide adequate warnings to the workers and end users of the products.

Yet another type of claim is a bankruptcy claim against an asbestos trust. Many asbestos companies have filed for bankruptcy protection, meaning they cannot be sued in court. However, some of the companies were forced to establish asbestos injury trusts. The rules for filing trust claims are complex, but if done successfully, such claims can provide compensation to people who can prove they have a disease resulting from exposure to the bankrupt company's products.

Determining which kind of claim or claims you should file is an important step in the process, and it's important to understand the advantages and disadvantages of each. Before deciding how to proceed, we recommend that you consult with an experienced North Carolina asbestos lawyer.

Contact a North Carolina Asbestos Lawyer at Martin & Jones For Help

Asbestos cases are complex, and your future is riding on the outcome. At Martin & Jones, we provide dedicated legal representation to make sure that you and your family get the compensation you need. If you'd like to discuss your case and learn more about how we can help, call us at 800-662-1234 or [contact us online](#) to schedule a free consultation.