

Incidence of pleural mesothelioma in Liguria Region, Italy (1996-2002).

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In this study, incidence of pleural malignant mesothelioma (PMM) in the Liguria Region (Italy) (approximately 1.6 million inhabitants), in the presence of asbestos exposure was investigated. New PMM cases recorded by the Mesothelioma Registry of Liguria, from 1996 to 2002 and interviews reported on a standardised questionnaire were analysed according to demographical and etiological characteristics. Nine hundred and forty five PMM cases were recorded (757 males and 188 females); the age standardised (European population) incidence rates per 100,000 were 8.51 and 1.43, respectively. The rates among the four provinces ranged between 1.18 and 13.7 for males and 0.68 and 1.44 for females. The questionnaire was evaluated for 786 PMM cases (or next-of-kin). Higher incidence rates were reported in the provinces with larger industrial and harbour areas, including shipyards (construction and repair), dockyards, building activities, chemical and heavy industrial activities. Asbestos exposure was unlikely or unknown for 57.5% females and 15% males. A major role of environmental asbestos exposure in the etiology of PMM is hypothesised for females and for a minor proportion of males.