

Stime di incidenza del mesotelioma pleurico nel Lazio, 1997-2000

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KEY WORDS

Asbestos; cancer registry; mesothelioma

SUMMARY

«Estimates of pleural mesothelioma incidence in the Lazio region (Italy), 1997-2000». Background: Malignant mesothelioma is indicative of past exposure to asbestos. In recent years an increase of incidence and mortality from malignant mesothelioma has been observed. Recent legislation in Italy requires nation-wide registration of asbestos-related pathologies. We conducted a preparatory study for systematic recording of cases of malignant pleural mesothelioma in the Lazio region. Objectives: To register new diagnoses of malignant mesothelioma, to estimate the incidence in the Lazio region, and to evaluate possible survey instruments. Methods: We conducted a systematic study of hospital admissions in the region with diagnosis of cancer of the pleura (ICD-IX 163) in the period 1997-2000. Clinical information and results of diagnostic tests were requested for 530 patients from the hospitals involved. Using the capture-recapture method, it was possible to estimate the accuracy of the data we compiled using hospital admissions as the data source (76.8%, 95% C.I.=76.4-77.3). Results: After careful review of clinical documentation, the diagnosis of malignant mesothelioma of the pleura was confirmed in 31.6% of cases (156 cases diagnosed). The percentage of confirmed cases has risen over the years (from 21% in 1997 to 45.1% in 2000) and it was higher in large public hospitals than in other types of health care facilities. On the basis of 156 confirmed cases of mesothelioma (116 males and 40 females), we estimated the annual incidence of the disease in the Lazio region as 1.73 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants among men and 0.47 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants among women. Conclusions: The results show that the incidence of mesothelioma in the region is consistent with national data, falling in the middle of the range for all Italian regions. However, some areas emerge (for example, Colferro, Civitavecchia, Tarquinia, Ferentino, Gaeta, Aprilia, Pomezia) that have particularly high rates, probably in relation to past occupational asbestos exposure. The role of diffuse environmental exposure in Rome may warrant further investigation.

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