



# Is Your Cancer Work-related?

**FACT** Most work-related cancers do not appear until years after exposure to the carcinogen. Even if you were exposed many years ago, your cancer may still be related to your work.<sup>1</sup>

Work-related cancer is any cancer that results from exposure to cancer-causing agents\* at work

## MORE

It is estimated that up to **1 in 5** cancers are work-related<sup>2</sup>

The total number of cancers caused by work is unknown, partly because they are not always reported

Work-related cancer is more common in men than women<sup>2,3</sup>

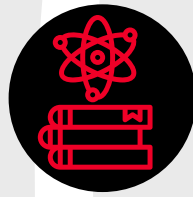
Some types of cancer are more likely to be caused by work than others

Some occupations, such as firefighting and painting have higher rates of cancer

## Steps for Determining if Your Cancer is Work-related:



**IDENTIFY** the specific diagnosis of the primary cancer



**REVIEW** the scientific literature to identify known cancer causing agents



**REVIEW** your work history and workplace exposures to identify carcinogens that you were exposed to



**ASSESS** the exposures to see if they are specific to your cancer and are in a quantity and a timeframe that would be consistent with contributing to the development of your cancer

## Occupational Exposures Accepted by International Experts as Causing Cancer in Humans

**Lung** – Arsenic, Asbestos, Beryllium, Bis(chloromethyl) ether, Cadmium, Chromium (VI), Coal, Coal-tar pitch, Diesel exhaust, Nickel, Plutonium Radon, Radiation\* (X ray & Gamma), Silica dust, Soot, Tobacco smoking (TS), Acheson process. Painting, Coke production, Hematite mining, Rubber or Aluminum production, Iron and steel founding

**Mesotheliom** – Asbestos, Erionite, Fluoro-edenite, Paintin

**Bladder** – Arsenic, Benzidine, Radiation\*, TS, 4-Aminobiphenyl, 2-Naphthylamine, O-Toluidine. Painting. Aluminum, Auramine, Magenta or Rubber production

**Kidney** – Trichloroethylene, Radiation\*

**Leukemia / Lymphoma** – Benzene, Formaldehyde, Radiation\*, Lindane. Thorium232, Fission products, Rubber production, 1,3Butadiene

**Nasopharynx** – Formaldehyde, Wood dust

**Sino-nasal** – Nickel, Wood dust, Leather dust, Radium 226, 228

**Stomach** – Radiation\*, Rubber production

**Larynx** – Asbestos, acid mists

**Liver** – Vinyl chloride, Plutonium, Thorium 232, 1,2-Dichloropropane

**Blood and Lymph** – 1,3-Butadiene

**Ovary** – Asbestos

**Breast** – Radiation. Working at night (probable)

**Skin (non-melanoma)** – Solar radiation, Radiation\*Mineral oils, PAHs, Arsenic, Azathioprine Coal-tar, Soot, Shale oils

**Skin (melanoma)** – Solar radiation, Polychlorinated biphenyls

**All cancer sites** – 2,3,7,8-Tetrachlordibenzo-para-dioxin

There are other exposures which are classified as probable or possible causes of cancer which may have contributed to your cancer. For a full list of these exposures visit the International Agency for Research on Cancer website:  
[www.iarc.fr/monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Classification/Table4.pdf](http://www.iarc.fr/monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Classification/Table4.pdf)  
[handbooks.iarc.fr/docs/OrganSitePoster.pdf](http://handbooks.iarc.fr/docs/OrganSitePoster.pdf)

\*also known as carcinogens

## If You Think Your Cancer is Work-related...



**Ask your doctor** if they know of a link between your cancer and your work. If they do, ask that they complete a WSIB Form 8 to initiate a claim.



**Ask your worker, union health and safety or WSIB representative for help.**



Contact the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)

1-800-387-0750 | [wsib.on.ca](http://wsib.on.ca)



Contact Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)

Occupational health staff (physicians, nurses, hygienists) can assist with information about work-related cancers and the exposures associated with them. An individual assessment can be arranged if appropriate. Your doctor can also contact OHCOW for assistance. There is no charge for OHCOW services and workers can contact the clinic directly

1-877-817-0336 | [ohcow.on.ca](http://ohcow.on.ca)

## References:

1. Alberta Cancer Foundation. (2005). Cancer and the workplace: An overview for workers and employers.
2. Rushton, L., Bagga, S., et al (2010). Occupation and cancer in Britain. British Journal of Cancer, 102, 1428-1437.
3. Fritsch, L., & Driscoll, T. (2006). Cancer due to occupation in Australia. ANZJPH, 30(3), 213-19.
4. World Health Organization. (2011). Environmental and occupational cancers.
5. Demers, P. A. (2013). Occupational cancer: Current knowledge, gaps, and the role of research.
6. International Agency for Research on Cancer. (2013). List of classifications by cancer sites with sufficient or limited evidence in humans, Volumes 1 to 109. <http://monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Classification/Table4.pdf>
7. Peters CE, Ge CB, Hall AL, et al. (2014). CAREX Canada: an enhanced model for assessing occupational carcinogen exposure. Occup Environ Med.



## Why Report Your Cancer?

If your exposures are identified as causing cancer, steps may be taken to **prevent** your co-workers and others from being exposed, preventing future cancer cases.

You may be eligible for **benefits** from WSIB such as lost earnings from work, money to help pay for your medical costs and other financial compensation.

It **draws attention** to this important topic and provides information for future research.



Learn more at [www.ohcow.on.ca/occupational-illness/illnesses/work-related-cancer/](http://www.ohcow.on.ca/occupational-illness/illnesses/work-related-cancer/)