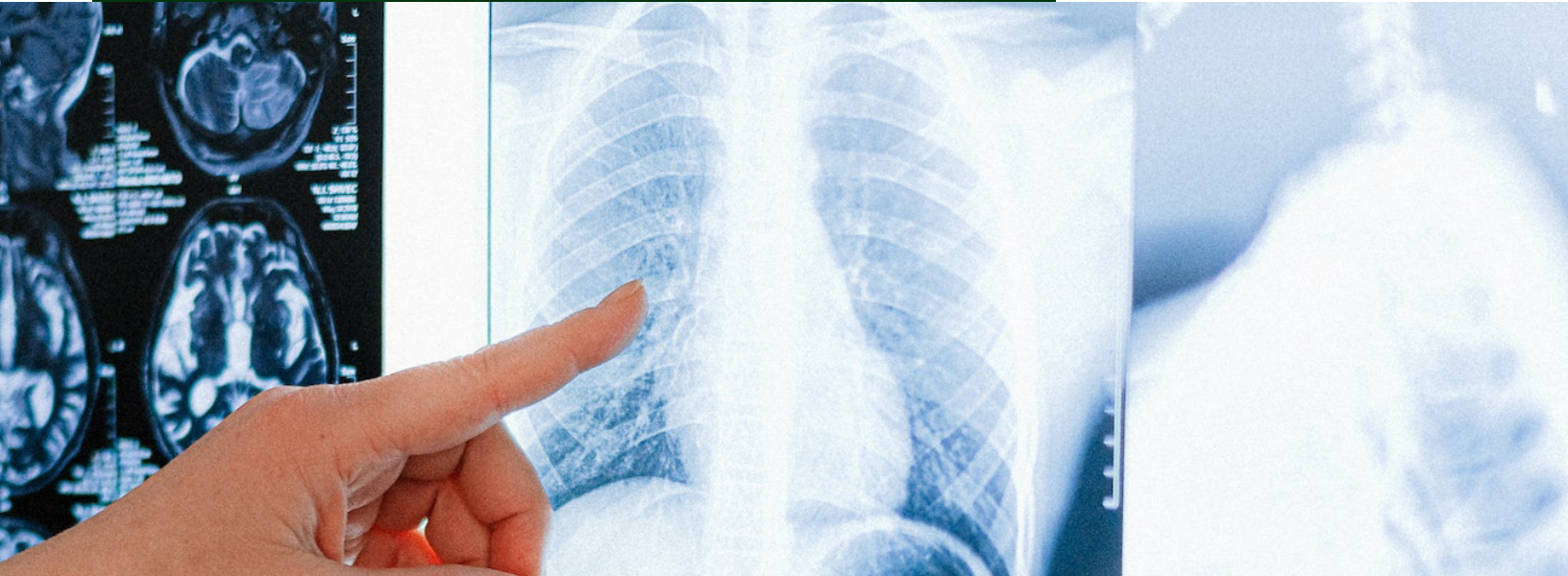


ASBESTOS AND HEALTH CONCERNS



Exposure. Most exposure comes from inhaling airborne asbestos fibers. This can occur during the mining process, when making or installing asbestos-containing products, when renovating or remodeling, or when an asbestos-containing product deteriorates and releases tiny fibers into the air.

When tiny asbestos fibers are disturbed and become airborne, they can easily be inhaled. Once inside the lungs, they become trapped and, over time, cause inflammation, scarring, and even genetic damage (cellular mutation). The fibers can also damage the lining of the stomach and intestinal tract if they are ingested. While diseases tend to develop from heavy exposure over an extended period, no amount of asbestos exposure is considered safe.

Asbestosis. Asbestosis causes scarring of the lungs which in turn reduces the ability of a person to inhale and exhale properly, making it quite difficult to breathe. Asbestosis may take many years to show up – the time between exposure and symptoms may be between 15 to 30 years.

What cancers are associated with asbestos exposure?

The two most common forms of cancer linked to asbestos exposure are mesothelioma and lung cancer. Other cancers have been associated with asbestos, too, such as laryngeal cancer and ovarian cancer. Further, some studies suggest a correlation between asbestos exposure and breast or colon cancer.

