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Full TALE

Case Report from the Thoracic Services  
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Asbestosis Following Brief Exposure in Cigarette Filter  
Manufacture<sup>1</sup>

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*Abstract.* Severe asbestosis was found on lung biopsy in a 47-year-old weaver mill worker, who, 16 years before, was exposed to asbestos dust for a period of only 9 months. He made cigarette filters which consisted of a mixture of Cape Blue asbestos and acetate. The presenting symptom of dyspnea on exertion and classic radiographic changes first became evident 13 years later. Characteristic pathophysiologic findings of restrictive insufficiency and diffusing impairment were demonstrated. Pulmonary insufficiency progressed over a 2-year period to total disability.

*Key Words*  
Asbestosis  
Cigarette filters-asbestosis

The myriad products containing asbestos are reviewed and the dangers of exposure in secondary industries using these products are emphasized.

The rapidly escalating world consumption of asbestos, a useful but dangerous 'magic mineral' [1], presents one of today's most important occupational health hazards [2, 3]. Early descriptions of asbestosis related the disease to prolonged and intense exposure, mainly in mining and asbestos manufacturing industries [4, 5]. Today, asbestos is a common ingredient of innumerable building, paint, automotive, textile, filtration and other products (table 1). Inadequate labeling, careless handling and unsupervised use of such materials may represent greater occupational hazards than exposure in the asbestos industry itself and, indeed, it may lead to worrisome environmental contamination [6]. The following case illustrates the dangers of even very brief exposure, the apparently 'benign' occupations where asbestos may be a serious hazard, and the importance of detailed occupational history-taking.

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