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International Journal of Cancer

Evolution of pleural cancers and malignant pleural mesothelioma incidence in France between 1980 and 2005

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The evolution of pleural cancers and malignant pleural mesothelioma incidence in France between 1980 and 2005 was analysed using data derived from the French network of cancer registries (FRANCIM) and the French National Mesothelioma Surveillance Program (PNSM). Mesothelioma proportions in pleural cancers were calculated by diagnosis year in the 1980–2000 period. Our results suggest that the incidences of pleural cancer and mesothelioma levelled off in French men since 2000 and continued to increase in French women. A decrease of the annual pleural cancer incidence average in men was noticed (−3.4% of annual rate of change) between 2000 and 2005. The proportion of pleural cancers that were mesothelioma was unchanged between 1980 and 2003 with an average of 86%. The age standardised incidence rate of pleural mesothelioma remained relatively stable between 1998 and 2005 with a slight falling trend. For women, the age standardised incidence rate of pleural cancers and mesothelioma increased during the period 1998–2005. Additionally, the proportion of pleural cancers that were mesothelioma increased during the same period of time. Finally, the increased trend observed in the incidence of pleural mesothelioma and cancers in women is credibly due to their under diagnosis in the 1980–1997 period. The comparison between the French incidence and the American and British ones shows that the decreasing trend in incidence of mesothelioma and pleural cancers in French men since 2000 is potentially associated with a lower amphibole consumption and by the implementation of safety regulations at work from 1977.

Epidemiology

Key words: pleural cancers, malignant pleural mesothelioma, incidence, time trends, cancer registry, PNSM
DOI: 10.1002/ijc.24711
History: Received 9 Feb 2009; Accepted 23 Jun 2009; Online 30 Jun 2009
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The incidence of pleural cancers, specifically malignant pleural mesothelioma in men, has shown a consistent increase in many industrialised countries for several decades. Despite marked variations from one country to another, a rise of mesothelioma incidence and mortality has been observed in European countries, including Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and in Canada and Japan.[1–7] Incidence calculated projections suggest a peak in men around 2017 in the Netherlands, around 2014 in Australia and between 2011 and 2015 in Great