

News Alerts

News Alert!

Cancer and Chemical Poisons

Dr. Percivall Pott

London, 1775

I have been studying the various forms of cancer that plague our society. It has come to my attention that people of certain occupations have higher frequencies of certain types of cancer than the general public. In particular, chimney sweeps have a high rate of cancer of the scrotum. Young boys often enter the profession because they are able to squeeze down narrow chimneys. Once inside the chimneys, they spend hours scraping them clean of the accumulated tars that otherwise would cause disastrous chimney fires. Sweeps are continually covered with flue tar and dust, and because they likely do not bathe regularly, this dust remains trapped in the folds of the skin. I believe that some agent in the coal tar, when exposed to the scrotum across many years, actually causes this disease.

News Alert!

Cancer and Your Family History

Dr. Hilario de Gouvea

Brazil, 1886

Today I would like to present a most curious case. It may shed light on an aspect of cancer about which we know little. Fourteen years ago, a man brought his 2-year-old son in for treatment of retinoblastoma, a very rare form of cancer that develops within the eye, often of young children. If untreated, the cancer travels up the optic nerve until it reaches the brain and spreads throughout the body. I removed the tumor, and the boy was completely cured. He married and had seven children. Curiously, two of his girls developed retinoblastoma in both eyes. The parents refused treatment, and both girls died within several months. Here, a form of cancer that normally occurs once in every 20,000 children has occurred three times in one family. I believe this represents evidence that susceptibility to cancer can be transmitted from parents to children, just like hair or eye color.

News Alert!

Cancer and Radiation Exposure

X-Ray Technician

New York, 1902

X-rays are the marvel of modern science. These powerful yet invisible rays permit us to see the inner workings of the body and provide treatments that we are just beginning to understand. Let technicians be warned, however, these rays, while capable doing great good, can also do great harm. We have noticed a high rate of skin cancer among technicians who use their hands to focus the energized machine. Patients are exposed only briefly to these rays. Technicians, on the other hand, work on these machines all day long and have many hours of exposure. Our advice is to keep the machine off while adjusting it and even to go to the next room when it is time to energize it.

News Alert!
Cancer and UV Light
News Reporter
Miami, 1945

Now that the war is over, Americans are ready to relax and enjoy their freedom. What better place to recuperate than at the beach? Women have cast aside the Victorian fashions of yesteryear and have adopted the new, sleek, trimmed-down swimsuit. Sunbathers say the more skin, the better. Be warned, however, that all this skin and sun can lead to painful burns. In fact, now doctors are warning of a possible connection between the sun's rays and skin cancer. Perhaps the unseen ultraviolet rays that fade our clothes can also damage skin and lead to deadly disease. Maybe a healthy tan is not so healthy after all.