

Pleural Plaques and Heart Disease

OKorhola et al. Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health Apr (2001) Vol.27 #2 p 154.

A study of a proposed association between pleural plaques (PP) and coronary heart disease.

X-rays from 148 consecutive admissions for coronary angiography and from 100 consecutive lung cancer patients, were examined.

The prevalence of PP was 35% for coronary patients and 19% for lung cancer patients.

Calcified PP were more common among men, and prevalence increased with age.

Adjusted risk ratio (RR) = 2.19 (95% CI = 1.44,3.32) i.e. pleural plaques were more common among those with heart disease than among those with lung cancer.

Severity of PP was not related to severity of CHD, diabetes, smoking or hyperlipidemia.

No exposure information was obtained.

Comments

The origin of pleural plaques remains uncertain. It is by no means certain that PP in any individual case are the result of inhalation exposure.

A plausible biological link between heart disease and pleural plaques may be that both are a result of infection. Similarly, the association may just reflect a common susceptibility factor or some other aetiological factor.

