

*HS Lee et al. Occupational and Environmental Medicine. July (2001) Vol.58 #7 p467.*

A study of post diagnosis progression of silicosis among granite workers in Singapore. Signs of progression after cessation of exposure would be of interest in assessing long term harm.

Serial x-rays of silicosis were obtained over a 17 year period.

Assessment was made of the role of initial severity, time since diagnosis, time since last exposure and tuberculosis as potential risk factors for progression.

Overall, 37% of cases showed some progression. ILO categories 1, 2 and 3 had 31.6%, 37.5% and 52% progression respectively. The Odds Ratio for progression was only statistically significant for ILO category 3 at diagnosis.

Progression was found to be less likely the sooner exposure ceased (as it would be if severity were not great).

There was no effect of age or smoking.

#### Comment

Progression of silicosis after cessation of exposure seems likely for the most severe cases only.

Lack of correlation with age or smoking status suggests silicosis is not responsive to co risk factors for lung disease. This is difficult to rationalise.

