

The Loretta's Legacy Foundation Newsletter

Friends,

We are well on our way of fully establishing the Loretta's Legacy Foundation in memory of Loretta De Rosa, a young, vivacious woman who lost a valiant battle with Mesothelioma, a rare form of lung cancer most often linked to Asbestos exposure. Loretta did not know how or where she may have contracted this cancer, but the result was the same. We must increase awareness of this dreadful disease and try to eradicate this as a life-ending sentence.

"Mesothelioma patients need time. With time and resources, we can find reasonable treatments. With each day that a patient's lives, there is hope that a cure can be found and administered before time runs out."

Dr. Robert B. Cameron
Thoracic Surgical Oncologist,
UCLA Medical School

Upcoming Events Mark your Calendars

June 7th, 2003 8:00pm

The Legacy Continues...
Social Night – Bring your friends for Food, Drinks, Entertainment, Music, Silent Auction and More – Tickets - \$20
The Swimming Pool,
3200 Dufferin St.
(416)782-SWIM

September 29th, 2003

1st Annual Loretta's Legacy Golf Tournament
Kleinburg Golf Club
Put your foursomes together now. Details to follow shortly.

Check our website for details.

Contact Info

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Keep Up The Fight!

MESOTHELIOMA –Background

For 50 years, North America's industrial and building trades workers and many others were exposed to asbestos. The so-called "miracle mineral" was common in the workplace, and many were exposed simply by breathing the air at their job sites. When they brought the asbestos fibres home each night in their clothes and hair, their families were exposed also. Thousands of North Americans each year now develop Mesothelioma, a malignant tumour that aggressively invades the linings of the lungs, abdomen, heart or testicles.

The tumour was first described in the medical literature in the late 1940's. However, until very recently, little was done to find effective treatments for Mesothelioma patients. Instead, the tumour historically has been accepted as incurable and fatal, and those diagnosed with Mesothelioma have been offered only limited treatment choices. Those choices are limited further if the patient's doctors are not aware of available clinical trials and treatment protocols.

In North America, 2,500 to 4,000 patients are diagnosed with Mesothelioma annually. But Mesothelioma has yet to find the spotlight for research and funding. The lack of concern may come from the mistaken belief that the problem will soon go away, since asbestos use was substantially curtailed in the 1970's. But Mesothelioma latency period is 15-50 years, so asbestos exposure from the 1970's or earlier may lead to Mesothelioma for another two decades. Furthermore, the risk of exposure continues *today* in many occupational settings, and in buildings such as homes, offices and schools, in which asbestos was previously used or installed and remains present. Thus experts predict Mesothelioma incidence will continue to *increase* for another 10 to 20 years.

The tragedy of 9/11 demonstrates the continued, long-term threat of Mesothelioma. Estimates of the amount of asbestos destroyed in the terrorist attack in Manhattan range as high as 1,000 tons. The impact pulverized this asbestos into tiny, microscopic fibres, to which the firefighters, rescue workers and other heroes of 9/11 were exposed, as well as workers, residents and school children who returned to the area in the weeks and months following. After Mesothelioma long latency period, the risk of cancer among those most heavily exposed could reach as high as one in ten.

Unfortunately, while the impending wave of Mesothelioma continues to grow, millions of dollars are spent on assigning or deflecting blame, but not enough has been invested in addressing the problem at the treatment level.

Source: Mesothelioma Advanced Research Foundation

OUR MISSION - To create awareness for Mesothelioma and other Non-smoking related Lung Cancers, fund further research in these areas and provide a support network for sufferers and their families.

Board of Directors

Paolo De Rosa

Geoffrey Shields

Rossana DiLieto

Eileen Rakovitch

Antonella Dametto

Statistics (prior to 2000)

- 50% of patients who received only supportive care died within six months
- Only 28% of those considered for surgery were Stage I (most were end-stage)
- Even with the best therapy for Stage I disease (surgery, chemo and radiation), the average five year survival rate was less than 30%