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# PLEURAL PLAQUES: MARKERS OF ASBESTOS EXPOSURE OR INDIPENDENT RISK FACTOR FOR PLEURAL MESOTHELIOMA? A CASE REPORT

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**Abstract**
Pleural plaques (PPs) represent the most common non malignant asbestos-related disease. Currently PPs are widely referred as a markers of asbestos exposure and not as an independent risk factor for the development of asbestos-related neoplastic diseases (1). However, the association between PPs and pleural mesothelioma (PM) remains controversial, as some studies on cohorts of asbestos exposed workers have shown correlation between PPs and PM. Despite this, scientific literature is poor. Research has been focused on the relationship between PPs and lung cancer, while there is a lack of studies on the possible relationship between PPs and the development of PM.
*Case presentation*
A clinical case of a patient with a history of occupational asbestos exposure affected by asbestosis and PPs is presented. During the follow up managed by the Occupational Medicine of Siena a PM was diagnosed at a PP.
*Conclusions*
The widespread belief that there is no relationship between PPs and PM is not supported by a vast literature as it happens for the absence of association between PPs and lung cancer. In the patient described it is not possible to determine whether the localization of the PM at a PP is incidental or not and whether the PM can be attributed only to intense exposure or even to the presence of PPs. Similar cases may not be uncommon even if not reported in the literature.
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