

New Research Centre to Study Occupational Cancer

Canada's first occupational cancer research centre is the newest battleground in the fight to eliminate work related cancers. Opened in Toronto, Ontario earlier this year, the centre is dedicated solely to the research of identifying, preventing and ultimately eliminating work related cancers.

While a number of substances (e.g. radon, benzene, coal tar and asbestos) and processes in the workplace are known to cause cancer, some substances that are suspected of being carcinogenic have never been properly evaluated. Some common types of occupational cancer are lung cancer, bladder cancer and mesothelioma. Research shows that the amount of cancer related to occupational exposure varies with the type of cancer. It is not known for certain to what substances workers are exposed, the level of concentration, or what kind of carcinogens are found in which kind of workplaces. There are many questions and few answers - for now.

The Occupational Cancer Research Centre will work to increase the knowledge base about workplace cancer and bring the results of the research to the workplace, educating and implementing initiatives to improve the health of workers. The centre is the result of health and workplace safety organizations, businesses, and labour groups joining forces with a common goal of reducing workplace cancer.

Dr. Aaron Blair, Interim Director of the centre and renowned expert in occupational and environmental epidemiology said, "The establishment of the Occupational Cancer Research Centre is a major step in identifying carcinogens in the workplace and initiating preventive actions." For more information: <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/>

Source: CCOHS