



## 1. What is asbestos and where can I find it?

Asbestos (as-bes-tos) is a fibrous mineral found in nature. Because these fibers are strong, flexible, and heat resistant, they have been used in many building materials, automobile parts, and heat-resistant fabrics. Asbestos fibers are very small and can only be seen with special equipment.

## 2. How might I be exposed to asbestos?

Most people are exposed daily to very small amounts of asbestos from the air we breathe and in the water we drink. Exposure to larger amounts is more likely in people who work with automobile brake pads or asbestos-containing building materials.

## 3. How can asbestos affect my health?

Breathing in large amounts of asbestos fibers over many years may damage or cause cancer in the lungs or the lining of tissue that surrounds the lungs and the abdomen. Most people do not develop health problems from daily exposure to small amounts of asbestos.

## 4. How can I reduce my exposure to asbestos?

- If you have material containing asbestos in your home and it is in good condition, it is recommended that you leave it alone.
- If the material is damaged, contact the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to find out how to test your home and to locate a company that is certified to remove or contain the material.

### Sources

1. *Asbestos*. L.A. Department of Public Health.  
<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/tox/>
2. *Asbestos*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/Environmental/>
3. *Asbestos*. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency <http://www.epa.gov/>

For additional resources, please dial 2-1-1 or visit the L.A. County Department of Public Health website <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov>.