



Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma Treatment: Surgery

[Surgery](#) is the physical removal of the malignant tumor.

Pleural Surgery

The tumors of the pleural mesothelium usually are diagnosed in one lung or in one lung being more extensively involved than the other lung. These tumors have usually extended into surrounding tissue and the lung itself. Therefore, removal of an affected lung and nearby tissues is an option for treatment.

In treating [pleural mesothelioma](#) several types of surgery are available:



- A pleurectomy/decortication removes part of the lining of the chest and some of the tissues around it. This procedure can reduce the size of the tumor. Used as a palliative (relief of symptoms) treatment, it reduces chest wall pain and helps to prevent fluid from forming in the affected area. Statistics show little increase in the survival rate with the use of this procedure.
- A pneumonectomy removes a lung, the lining that surrounds the lung, and some of the tissues around it. This is the same surgery as a pleurectomy with the additional removal of the lung and also is intended usually as a palliative treatment. Statistics show little increase in the survival rate with the use of this procedure.
- An extrapleural pneumonectomy is a surgical option when the tumor is localized and diagnosed early. The patient must be in good general health and with no major illnesses. The purpose of extrapleural pneumonectomy is to remove all of the affected tissue. It removes the parietal pleura (the lining of the lung), the pericardium (the lining of the heart), the diaphragm (the muscle that assists in breathing) and the lung on the affected side. This is a major surgery that is performed only by surgeons at a large specialized medical facility and is part of an extensive plan of treatment. A regime of chemotherapy and radiology follows the surgery. Recovery time for the entire treatment is about one year. Patients who undergo this treatment have a survival rate of about 3 1/2 years and often are able to lead a fairly normal life.
- Thoracentesis is a surgical procedure as a diagnostic or a palliative treatment. Fluid in the pleural mesothelium is removed by inserting a syringe into the mesothelium and withdrawing fluid. This relieves pressure and pain and improves the ability to breathe.

Peritoneal Surgery

Surgery of the peritoneal mesothelium is performed to remove malignant tissues and when necessary the affected abdominal organ. Peritoneal surgery is also mainly used as a palliative procedure. Statistics show little increase in the survival rate with the use of this procedure.

Pericardial Surgery

A rare form of mesothelioma affects the lining of the heart. Surgery for this condition removes the lining around the heart. This is a palliative treatment usually not intended to achieve a cure.

Orchidectomy

An extremely rare form of mesothelioma affects the testicles and is classified as a peritoneal (abdominal) mesothelioma. Surgical treatment is the same as used for other organs of the abdomen, which includes removal of the affected mesothelium and sometimes the affected organ (orchidectomy).