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Abstract

Health Evaluation of Ex-Workers Occupationally Exposed to Carbon Disulfide: Subjective Symptoms and Related Factors According to Compensation for CS₂ Poisoning

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Objectives: To investigate the chronological subjective symptoms and related factors in ex-workers who were occupationally exposed to Carbon disulfide.

Methods: One hundred and seventy-seven subjects (147 males and 30 females) were randomly selected among ex-workers and interviewed by well trained doctors, who filled out a structured questionnaire developed by authors on the subjective symptoms. The questionnaire was composed of symptoms in the head and neck, and those of the neuro-psychological, respiratory, endocrine, musculoskeletal, and reproductive systems. Other factors such as general and occupational characteristics including work department, work duration, duration since cessation of exposure, and compensation for occupational disease were also investigated.

Results: The mean subject age was 55.4 years. The mean cumulative exposure index (CEI) was 38.96 ± 31.18 . CEI was significantly higher in the compensated group (47.61 ± 32.51) than in the non-compensated group (26.81 ± 24.75)($p=0.000$). Symptom complaints were significantly higher in the compensated group in all organ systems, and their incidence increased gradually until 10 years after cessation of work, and then decreased. The mean duration for cessation of exposure at the time of compensation was 10.97 years. The significantly different factors between the compensated group and the non-compensated group were total cumulative exposure index and the time interval between the cessation of work and the time of compensation.

Conclusion: Our findings suggest that total cumulative exposure index and the time interval between the cessation of work and the time of compensation may be important factors affecting the compensation for occupational disease. Therefore, further studies will be necessary.

Key Words: Carbon disulfide, Ex-workers, Subjective symptoms

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(Drexler et al., 1995; Chu et al., 1996; Liss et al., 1996; Omae et al., 1997; Takebayashi et al., 1998; Lewis et al., 1999).

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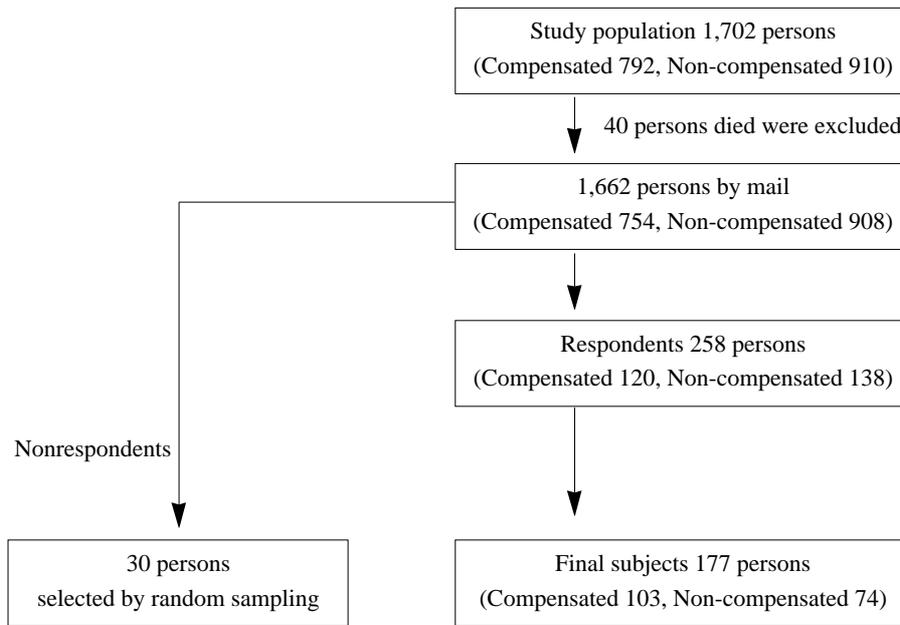


Fig 1. Study subjects

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Table 1. General characteristics of the study subjects

Variables		Respondents	Nonrespondents	P
		N (%)	N (%)	
Sex	Male	147(83.0)	27(90.0)	0.428
	Female	30(17.0)	3(10.0)	
Age (years)	<39	6(3.4)	1(3.3)	0.124
	40~49	27(15.3)	10(33.3)	
	50~59	93(52.5)	12(40.0)	
	60-	51(28.8)	7(23.4)	
Exposure level	High exposed group	156(88.1)	23(76.7)	0.143
	Low exposed group	21(11.9)	7(23.3)	
Compensation for CS ₂ poisoning	Yes	103(58.2)	15(50.0)	0.402
	No	74(41.2)	15(50.0)	
Educational level	Elementary school	45(25.6)	7(23.3)	0.439
	Middle school	63(35.8)	13(43.3)	
	High school	65(36.9)	9(30.0)	
	College and over	3(1.7)	0(0.0)	
Smoking	Yes	116(65.5)	23(76.7)	0.230
	No	61(34.5)	7(23.3)	
Alcohol drinking	Yes	109(61.6)	17(56.7)	0.610
	No	68(38.4)	13(43.3)	
Drug use	Yes	142(80.2)	11(36.7)	0.000**
	No	35(19.8)	19(63.3)	
Exercise	Yes	90(50.9)	13(43.3)	0.447
	No	87(49.1)	17(56.7)	
Total		177(100.0)	30(100.0)	

²-test : ** ; P< 0.01.

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Table 2. Mean score of the complained symptoms by compensation for CS₂ poisoning

Complained symptoms	Total (N=177)	Compensation		P
		Yes (N=103)	No (N=74)	
General symptoms	1.38 ± 0.97	1.48 ± 0.93	1.26 ± 1.01	0.074
Head/Neuropsychological	5.25 ± 3.02	5.59 ± 2.96	4.77 ± 3.05	0.037*
Peripheral nervous system	2.75 ± 1.55	2.84 ± 1.62	2.64 ± 1.45	0.213
Eye	2.96 ± 1.39	3.11 ± 1.31	2.74 ± 1.48	0.056
Otolaryngeal	2.41 ± 1.54	2.53 ± 1.47	2.24 ± 1.63	0.124
Respiratory	1.10 ± 1.45	0.89 ± 1.34	1.38 ± 1.55	0.011*
Cardiovascular	0.75 ± 1.00	0.66 ± 0.89	0.87 ± 1.14	0.184
Gastrointestinal	0.89 ± 1.17	0.89 ± 1.16	0.88 ± 1.18	0.415
Endocrine	0.23 ± 0.69	0.15 ± 0.53	0.35 ± 0.85	0.034*
Renal	0.37 ± 0.65	0.36 ± 0.64	0.38 ± 0.66	0.393
Musculoskeletal	0.27 ± 0.45	0.20 ± 0.41	0.37 ± 0.49	0.009*
Reproductive	1.46 ± 1.44	1.68 ± 1.43	1.15 ± 1.40	0.006*

one-sided Wilcoxon rank sum test; * ; P< 0.05

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Table 3. Rate of the complained symptoms by compensation(1)

Complained symptoms	Total (N=177)	Compensation		P
		Yes (N=103)	No (N=74)	
During the work				
General symptom	0.35	0.43	0.23	0.006**
Head/Neuropsychological symptom	0.32	0.42	0.19	0.001**
PNS symptom	0.27	0.36	0.14	0.001**
Eye symptom	0.39	0.54	0.18	0.000**
Otolaryngeal symptom	0.44	0.54	0.30	0.001**
Respiratory symptom	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.903
Cardiovascular symptom	0.11	0.17	0.04	0.010*
Gastrointestinal symptom	0.23	0.25	0.19	0.321
Endocrine symptom	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.191
Renal symptom	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.653
Musculoskeletal symptom	0.07	0.09	0.04	0.222
Reproductive symptom	0.29	0.35	0.20	0.033*
Less than 5 years after the cessation of work				
General symptom	0.49	0.57	0.38	0.011*
Head/Neuropsychological symptom	0.52	0.61	0.39	0.004**
PNS symptom	0.51	0.61	0.37	0.001**
Eye symptom	0.63	0.74	0.47	0.000**
Otolaryngeal symptom	0.64	0.79	0.43	0.000**
Respiratory symptom	0.28	0.31	0.23	0.235
Cardiovascular symptom	0.25	0.31	0.18	0.042*
Gastrointestinal symptom	0.29	0.30	0.27	0.656
Endocrine symptom	0.10	0.08	0.12	0.328
Renal symptom	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.869
Musculoskeletal symptom	0.13	0.12	0.15	0.530
Reproductive symptom	0.40	0.49	0.27	0.004**

²-test ; * ; P< 0.05, ** ; P< 0.01.

Rate means proportion of complaints divided by number of questions in each symptom group.

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Table 4. Rate of the complained symptoms by compensation(2)

Complained symptoms	Total(N=177)	Compensation		P
		Yes(N=103)	No(N=74)	
Between 5 and 10 years after the cessation of work				
General symptom	0.55	0.64	0.43	0.006**
Head/Neuropsychological symptom	0.65	0.70	0.58	0.105
PNS symptom	0.66	0.69	0.62	0.348
Eye symptom	0.79	0.82	0.58	0.001**
Otolaryngeal symptom	0.75	0.90	0.54	0.000**
Respiratory symptom	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.829
Cardiovascular symptom	0.29	0.30	0.28	0.804
Gastrointestinal symptom	0.32	0.33	0.30	0.644
Endocrine symptom	0.12	0.09	0.16	0.129
Renal symptom	0.16	0.18	0.15	0.643
Musculoskeletal symptom	0.18	0.16	0.20	0.414
Reproductive symptom	0.43	0.53	0.28	0.001**
Over 10 years after the cessation of work				
General symptom	0.45	0.41	0.50	0.223
Head/Neuropsychological symptom	0.57	0.50	0.68	0.017*
PNS symptom	0.54	0.46	0.66	0.007**
Eye symptom	0.56	0.48	0.68	0.008**
Otolaryngeal symptom	0.55	0.52	0.60	0.291
Respiratory symptom	0.32	0.23	0.45	0.003**
Cardiovascular symptom	0.27	0.20	0.37	0.018*
Gastrointestinal symptom	0.28	0.27	0.30	0.711
Endocrine symptom	0.09	0.05	0.14	0.041*
Renal symptom	0.19	0.18	0.22	0.490
Musculoskeletal symptom	0.17	0.10	0.27	0.003**
Reproductive symptom	0.28	0.30	0.24	0.397

²-test ; * ; P< 0.05, ** ; P< 0.01.

Rate means proportion of complaints divided by number of questions in each symptom group.

(Table 6).

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Table 5. Comparison of rate of the complained symptoms among the compensated (N=103)

Complained symptoms	Before compensation	After compensation			
		within 2 yrs	2-4 years	4-6 years	over 6 yrs
General symptom	0.80	0.40	0.17	0.36	0.24
Head/Neuropsychological	0.70	0.32	0.21	0.42	0.30
PNS	0.76	0.33	0.20	0.41	0.27
Eye	0.79	0.28	0.21	0.42	0.28
Otolaryngeal	0.87	0.22	0.19	0.41	0.30
Respiratory	0.83	0.68	0.12	0.18	0.17
Cardiovascular	0.81	0.69	0.10	0.18	0.19
Gastrointestinal	0.84	0.71	0.11	0.14	0.16
Endocrine	0.97	0.91	0.01	0.06	0.04
Renal	0.81	0.81	0.09	0.13	0.12
Musculoskeletal	0.93	0.86	0.05	0.10	0.05
Reproductive	0.86	0.53	0.11	0.25	0.22

N ; number of subjects

Table 6. Odds ratio of related factors affecting to compensation for CS2 poisoning (N=177)

Independent variables		S.E.	P	Odds ratio	95% C.I.
Intercept	-0.85	1.36	0.531		
CEI ¹⁾	0.27	0.09	0.002**	1.30	1.098-1.563
Sex	-0.28	0.66	0.673	0.76	0.207-2.756
Age at entry	0.06	0.04	0.082	1.07	0.982-1.148
Smoking	0.09	0.53	0.860	1.10	0.387-3.092
Drinking	0.21	0.44	0.634	1.23	0.521-2.922
Exposure department	-0.41	0.60	0.489	0.66	0.205-2.151
Duration ²⁾	-0.12	0.03	0.000**	0.89	0.836-0.941

1) CEI means cumulative exposure index.

2) Duration means period between final health examination and work cessation.

Logistic regression analysis ; * ; P< 0.05, ** ; P< 0.01.

N ; number of subjects

(Tolonen M, 1975; Nurminen et al., 1985; Huang et al., 1996).

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Table 7. Cox proportional hazard model analysis of the time interval between the cessation of work and the time of compensation for CS₂ poisoning(N=177)

Independent variables		S.E.	P	Hazard ratio	95% C.I.
CEI ¹⁾	0.20	0.03	0.000**	1.22	1.152-1.295
Sex	-0.35	0.36	0.324	0.70	0.348-1.427
Age at entry	0.06	0.02	0.007**	1.06	1.021-1.104
Smoking	-0.11	0.28	0.688	0.89	0.517-1.551
Drinking	0.13	0.24	0.572	1.14	0.711-1.823
Educational level	0.38	0.25	0.128	1.46	0.896-2.387
Exposure department	-1.01	0.37	0.006**	0.36	0.176-0.752

1) CEI means cumulative exposure index.

Cox proportional hazard regression analysis ; * ; P< 0.05, ** ; P< 0.01.

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- 1990;15(2):134-40.
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