

patient was not known to have had any virus infection and did not smoke.

The patient did have a chronic bronchopulmonary fistula and presumably associated scarring. Although fistulas and bronchiectasis are not associated with pulmonary neoplasia, scarring is associated with adenocarcinoma, possibly as a result of the tumorigenic properties of desmoplasia.⁹ No such association has been described with squamous cell carcinoma, however, so the tumour may have been induced by the unusually long persistence of the fungus in the lung.

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The Social Impact of Asthma. Andrew Nocon, Tim Booth. (Pp 81; £6.) Sheffield: Centre for Primary Care Research, 1990. ISBN 0-907-484-14-X.

This small monograph addresses important questions about "the social impact of asthma on sufferers and their families." It is in three sections. The first is a most valuable review of published reports, which reveals evidence for an important impact of asthma on work (and school), social life, emotional wellbeing, and economics. There then follow two chapters giving the results and analysis of a survey by questionnaire of a group of asthmatic patients. Areas covered included general activities, changes made in the home, schooling, work, effects on carers, finances, and

emotional impact. The weakness of this section is the chosen base and the number of individuals studied. The choice of patients who had been admitted to hospital with asthma admittedly focuses attention on those with more severe asthma but as a consequence does not give a balanced overview of the social impact of this common disease as most asthmatics do not get admitted to hospital. With regard to numbers, a random sample of 60 subjects was drawn from 484 patients admitted to hospital during four months. In the end only 50 sets of results were available for analysis, so there is no way in which any valid statistical conclusion can be drawn. Fortunately the conclusions that the authors do gather together in their final section are broad and sensible, pointing to useful avenues to follow in the future.—DJL