



Les Wellington's MIM Medical Records and Job Transfers after the Lead-Smelter

Information collated by Les Wellington, ex-Mt Isa Mines Lead Smelter worker

MIM (Mt Isa Mines) Medical Records

Table 1: Copy of Dr Neville's attachments to his report.

Lead	Normal	Slight	Moderate	Severe	My results	Date
Blood Mgs/100gm	<0.04	<0.06	>0.06	>0.08	0.06 only test	16/3/72
Urine Mgs/Litre	0.07	<0.12	>0.12	>0.40	0.46 last test	13/4/72

Table 2: Copy of MIM lead testing results.

Date	Urine Code No.	Pb Mgs/Litre	Blood Lead Tests	
16th December 1971	57	0.26	No blood test	
21st January 1972	104	0.19	No blood test	
16th March 1972	LAB	0.23	Pb Blood 0.06	One and only blood test
21st March 1972	135	0.20	No blood test	
13th April 1972	87	0.46	No blood test	Last urine test
More than doubled		No more urine tests	No more blood tests	



Dr Neville stated in his letter that the last urine test showed 0.46 Mgs/Litre of lead in my urine, which indicated severe exposure to lead. In a photocopy from a toxicology book dated 1971, attached to Dr Neville's letter, it shows that only 0.40 Mgs/Litre in the urine indicates severe exposure. Please refer to Table 1.

Information I have received from the Lead Group states that my lead level (shown in the lead urine test 3 weeks before moving from the lead smelter on the 4th May 1972) indicates that I had 6 times above the acceptable level of lead.

The MIM 'lead testing table' (Table 2 above) indicates that;

The lead level in my last urine test on the 13th April 1972 had more than doubled, compared to the previous urine test on the 21st March 1972.

This last urine test showed severe exposure to lead at 0.46 Mgs/Litre.

That I had only one blood test on the 16th March 1972, which showed 0.06 Mgs/100mL.

That this blood test was done when my lead urine level was low at only 0.23 Mgs/Litre.

That I had not received a blood test when my urine lead level at 0.46 Mgs/Litre had more than doubled on the 13th April 1972.

Information I obtained from the JCU states that lead stays in the stomach, liver and kidneys for up to 4 months or more, which is the reason as in my case, for the dark urine and stomach problems, which is shown in my MIM medical records.

According to the information, people who experience severe stomach problems have had severe poisoning and should be treated immediately. In my case this never happened.

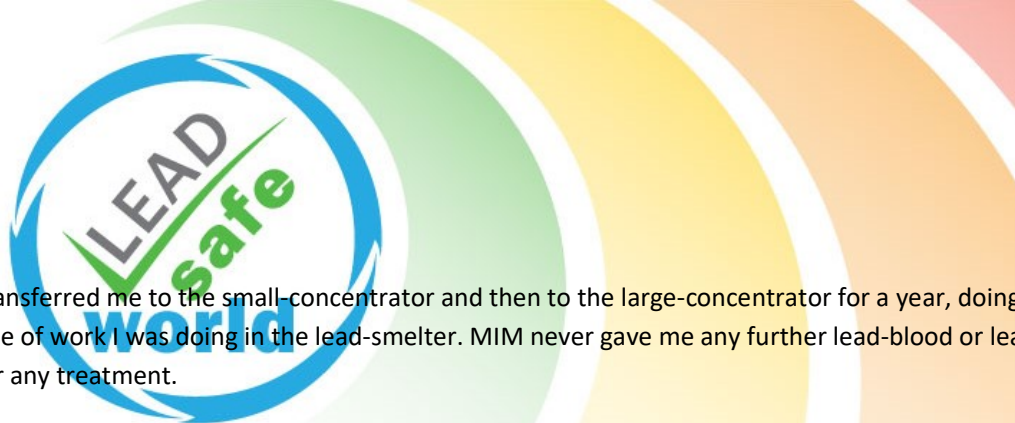
According to this information the only true blood reading to obtain is 6 months after the person has left lead-hazard areas.

As stated above the last lead-tests and urine-tests I had received were two and a half years before I was moved from lead-hazard areas (lead-concentrators, as explained below in more detail).

Job Transfers after the Lead-Smelter

MIM kept me working in the lead-smelter for 7 weeks after the one and only lead-blood test on the 16th March 1972, and 3 weeks after having the last lead-urine test on the 13th April 1972.

I was then transferred to the adjacent copper smelter for the next six months without further lead blood or urine tests or any treatment.



MIM then transferred me to the small-concentrator and then to the large-concentrator for a year, doing the same type of work I was doing in the lead-smelter. MIM never gave me any further lead-blood or lead-urine tests or any treatment.

Concentrators are where chemicals are mixed with copper and lead-concentrates before going to the smelters.

I then worked underground for six months without further lead-blood or lead-urine tests or any treatment.

I was then given jobs in several different areas in the MIM mining complex for the rest of my apprenticeship, without further lead-blood or lead-urine tests or any treatment.

I was then unceremoniously terminated from MIM after finishing my apprenticeship and given no further lead-tests or any treatment whatsoever.

If I had received the required lead-blood tests with the last two lead-urine tests on the 21st March 1972 and on the 13th April 1972, then the question would be; what would the results have been?

If I had been tested after the first signs of lead-poisoning for the two and a half years I was in lead-hazard areas, the question again is; what would the lead-blood test results have been?

If I had also been tested for lead for the mandatory 6 months after I had left the lead-hazard areas then the question is; what would the blood-lead test results have been?