

November 12, 1964

Dr. J. Newman  
33880 Lake Road  
Avon Lake, Ohio

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Doctor Newman:

We have recently observed several cases of hand disabilities in one of our plants, the cause of which is as yet unknown. We would like to determine as quietly as possible whether similar disabilities might exist in the Avon Lake Plant, and for this reason I would like to have you casually examine our employees' hands as a part of any other medical service you provide to them.

Specifically, the disability that we have seen is characterized by soreness of the tips of the fingers. Roentgenography of the hand has demonstrated bone changes, particularly bone resorption, in the distal phalangeal joints. In some cases this is quite marked. Blanching of the skin from decreased temperature is prevalent. Several of the cases exhibit fibrous rope-like dermatological changes of the hands. The disability has been described by several consultants as Raynaud's Phenomenon. In one instance it was called Scleroderma. The presenting symptoms do not clearly fit the classical description of either of these diseases.

I would like you to make careful observations of the hands of our employees as you see them for any reason. If you observe any soreness in the tips or any symptoms similar to those that I have described, will you please make a careful notation of the job assignment of the individual as well as his work history with the Company. As yet, we have no firm opinion that the disabilities we have seen are occupational in origin. We are investigating this matter and hope to eventually resolve this question. A logical avenue of investigation is to obtain as much information as we can about our own employees.

I would appreciate your proceeding with this problem as rapidly as possible, but doing it incidentally to other examinations of our personnel. We do not wish to have this discussed at all, and I request that you maintain this information in confidence. Will you please advise me by January 1, the approximate number of hands that you have seen and of any positive findings.

Sincerely yours,

M.D.

RHW/js

Rex H. Wilson, M.D.

cc: O.F. Beckmeyer  
A. Vittone  
W.W. Baughman



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