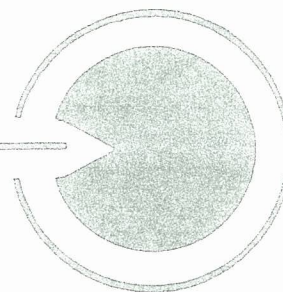


BIO-PROBE

NEWSLETTER



Volume 7

November 1991

Issue 6

THE ADA, FDA, NIDR, AND THE 4TH AMALGAM WAR

Has the 4th amalgam war been joined in full battle?

It would appear so!

Isn't it interesting that a handful of dentists, physicians, research scientists, medical writers and lay people, advocating the elimination of mercury as a dental material, have precipitated a full blown war to counter such a radical proposal. To date, there have been several components to the war, starting first with a major effort by the ADA to counter the outpouring of newsprint, magazine, radio and TV articles and programs all raising or voicing some doubt about the safety of amalgam. This same effort of counter attack has been picked up by U.S. Government activities that have a responsibility in determining the safety of dental amalgam. One can only wonder at the timing of the government activities as one might well wonder about the timing of the latest Consumer Reports, pro-amalgam article titled "The Mercury In Your Mouth."

AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION (ADA)

The American Dental Association (ADA), has organized the largest media and political lobbying events in its history. The membership of the ADA should seriously question why their membership dues are being expended in ever increasing amounts to:

- 1) Perpetuate the official ADA concoction that amalgam is safe, utilizing every conceivable tactic.
- 2) To attack every research study published in the world that casts even a suspicion of doubt as to the safety of dental amalgam as a filling material.
- 3) To insure that selected spokespersons cast doubt on the character, qualifications, and objectives of anyone who speaks out against the use of mercury in dentistry. Such people can only be frauds.
- 4) To attack every legislative initiative in the United States that even tries to suggest that patients have some constitutional entitlement to informed consent and freedom of choice. What right does a patient have

to question what material is implanted in his or her body?

5) Produce and distribute to over 1000 media sources, selected information proclaiming the safety of amalgam as a dental material.

6) Produce and distribute video news releases proclaiming the safety of amalgam dental fillings.

7) Produce and distribute patient literature providing answers (fabricated by so called experts) to normal questions from normal patients seeking the truth concerning any inherent danger there might be in implanting the toxin mercury in their body.

8) To lobby aggressively on the hill to insure that any congressional representative of the people doesn't get some weird idea that dental amalgam isn't safe.

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- 9) To insure that political and corporate pressure is brought to bear on any media outlet that has the audacity to do a program or print an article indicating there is concern about the safety of dental amalgam.
- 10) To exert pressure and influence on the allocation of government grants, insuring that the bulk of money allocated goes only to those individuals and institutions with a pro-amalgam background.
- 11) To foster exchange of information with such organizations as the National Council Against Health Fraud, Consumers Union, so as to insure a steady onslaught of pro-amalgam rhetoric.
- (12) Produce and distribute a special package to every dentist in the United States outlining the safety of dental amalgam and providing answers to questions about the safety of amalgam. This was a special mailing, that was sent out in January 1991 to counter the CBS 60 Minutes program aired in December 1990. All of this raises the question of the legality of expending tremendous amounts of funds from dues-paying ADA members to promulgate incomplete and misleading information to the dental profession and to the public.

WASHINGTON STATE DENTAL BOARD "GAG" RULE

Although I would like to make this (13) under the ADA game plan, I have no proof that the action of the Washington State Dental Board was precipitated by the ADA. The Washington State Dental Disciplinary Board has just held public hearings on proposals to change existing policy. The proposed changes would allow the disciplinary board to revoke the licenses of dentists who promote removal of fillings because of their mercury content. Further, the change would also allow the board to take action against doctors who tell patients that the fillings contain toxic material and may cause future health problems. In effect, because they have no scientific defense that amalgam is safe, the Washington State Dental Association, who is behind the proposal, would get their defense by governmental decree. Scientific data to the contrary, the proposed regulatory change would be imposing a "gag rule" calculated to silence dentists who warn their patients about the dangers of mercury/amalgam fillings and un-license dentists who may replace serviceable amalgam fillings. From a legal standpoint there are several constitutional and legal rights that would be violated-i.e, freedom of choice, freedom of speech, informed consent, and restraint of trade to name a few.

THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA)

The Food and Drug Administration, through its Dental Devices activity has effectively controlled all congressional, media, and personal inquiries related to the safety of amalgam as a dental device. Their latest effort being a public meeting of the Dental Products Panel of the Medical Devices Advisory Committee held on 15 March 1991. This panel concluded that there was insufficient evidence presented to take a position that dental amalgam is unsafe. However, sufficient unanswered questions were raised that should be answered by future research. What the panel didn't say is that the FDA has never approved amalgam as a dental device, and neither did the media reporting the event. The FDA has only approved mercury and the metal alloy to be combined with mercury to make amalgam, which is a clear violation of FDA Rules stating approved devices must be both safe and effective. Their position is quite clear. Dental amalgam is a reaction product manufactured by the dentist or the dental assistant when the mercury and the alloy are mixed together. Consequently, the FDA is saying to the dentists and the American people that it has no authority to classify a reaction product, containing a known poison, mixed in the dental office that is subsequently implanted into the human body. This is the same position stated by the ADA.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH)

The National Institutes of Health recently (26-28 August 1991) sponsored a technology assessment conference to evaluate the effects and side effects of dental restorative materials.

The Panel's conclusions announced at the end of the conference were stated as "Although mercury vapor is released from dental amalgam, the quantities released are very small and do not cause verifiable adverse