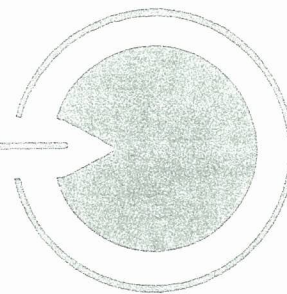


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The Truth About Dental Mercury Implants

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It is apparent that more and more people in the world are becoming aware of the fact that they may be walking around with a "Toxic Time Bomb" in their mouths. We estimate that in the latter part of 1990 alone, 40 million people learned that the "silver" dental fillings in their teeth were really mercury fillings and that they were continuously being exposed to mercury vapor released from these fillings. The dental filling material in question is an amalgam of mercury and a dental alloy composed of silver, copper, zinc, etc. Throughout the 160 years of its use in dentistry it has been referred to by the dental profession as silver, silver amalgam, or just plain amalgam but never, until very recently, as mercury dental fillings. Whatever the name, the final mixture placed in the tooth is 46-52% mercury by weight. Mercury in addition to being the main ingredient of this dental material also happens to be a poison that is more toxic than lead, arsenic or cadmium.

The reason so many people learned about the mercury/silver dental filling controversy during 1990 was simply that the media, i.e., newspaper, radio and television, focused on the subject. The catalyst for all the media attention was two research abstracts released by the University of Calgary Medical School in Canada where extensive animal research on dental mercury is being done.

In August of 1990 two abstracts of animal studies showing pathology caused by mercury/mercury vapor from mercury/silver dental fillings were published. One abstract related to a study that used sheep as the animal model and which demonstrated a 50% impairment of kidney function within 30 days after placement of twelve occlusal mercury fillings in each of the study sheep. The other abstract outlined the

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results of a cooperative study between the University of Georgia at Athens and the University of Calgary investigating the effect of mercury on gingival and gut microflora. In this study, two wild-caught monkeys were utilized as the test animals. Within two weeks after placement of 16 small occlusal mercury fillings in each monkey, both Gram positive and Gram negative intestinal bacteria had become resistant to mercury. A similar mercury resistance was seen in the Gram positive oral flora of one of the monkeys. The significance of bacterial mercury resistance in the gut is two-fold. First mercury resistant bacteria will essentially convert various forms of mercury back into the vapor state thus permitting further reabsorption and secondly, it was found that 80% of the mercury-resistant bacterial strains from these monkeys were also resistant to one or more antibiotics, despite the fact that the monkeys were not exposed to antibiotics in their food or water. Antibiotic resistance

has become a major medical public health concern and limits the effectiveness of antimicrobials.

Although the major investigative television programs had been aware of the mercury controversy in dentistry for a number of years, no one was willing to alert the public to the potential danger because there was no scientific research demonstrating pathology directly attributable to mercury from dental fillings. Although thousands of scientific research articles have been published that demonstrate adverse physiology, including death, attributable to environmental, industrial, and work-related exposures to mercury vapor, very little study on dental mercury had been done by medical researchers because they had been falsely lulled into believing that the mercury was locked into the fillings and did not escape.

The findings of the scientific research group at the University of Calgary Medical School offered sufficient evidence to substantiate doing a television report and the most famous of all the investigative programs, the CBS 60 Minutes Program, decided to proceed. The results of their exhaustive investigation into the use of mercury in dentistry was aired on December 16, 1990 in a memorable segment titled "A Poison In Your Mouth." The Investigator was Morley Safer and the producer of the program was Patti Hassler. The program was a complete and unbiased treatment of one of the most controversial medical issues of this century. The response to the program was overwhelming, both from the general public and the dental establishment. The public clamored for more information and wanted to know the dentists in their areas familiar with proper protocols for amalgam replacement and what materials should be used for replacement. The ADA on the other hand called "foul" and complained fiercely even though an ADA spokesperson appeared on the program and was given adequate time to explain the establishment position that dental amalgam was safe. The dental establishment has continued to bring pressure to bear on CBS and 60 Minutes in every way they can. Their ultimate goal apparently is to have CBS recant and have 60 Minutes do a rerun/update indicating that subsequent events have overtaken their report and that mercury fillings are in fact safe. The people of this country owe a debt of gratitude to CBS and 60 Minutes for not caving in. History will show just how important the December 16, 1990 program was to the health and well-being of millions of people all over the world.

That was 1990. 1991 has been a much different year. During 1991, the ADA, FDA, and National Institute of Dental Research (NIDR) have all been actively involved in the dental mercury controversy. The ADA organized the largest media and political lobbying events in its history, all designed to overcome the media effects of 1990 that had cast a reasonable doubt on the safety and continued use of mercury as a dental material. This unprecedented campaign by the ADA has used astronomical sums of membership funds, probably in the millions, for the highly unethical and unauthorized purpose of defending the continued use of a dental material of very questionable biocompatibility and safety. A dental material that world-wide scientific research was demonstrating to be far different from the fabricated position the ADA had been portraying to its membership and the American people.

Two other major media events were orchestrated by the dental establishment in 1991: In March 1991, the FDA Dental Products Panel of the Medical Devices Advisory Committee met to discuss the dental amalgam issue. The committee unanimously decided that there was not sufficient evidence that dental amalgam was harmful, but that questions had been raised that warranted further investigation. The result was media headlines that stated "Dental Fillings With Mercury Are Safe, Scientific Panel Says." The second event took place August 26-28, 1991 and was sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the NIDR. This was a "Technology Assessment Conference On Effects and Side Effects of Dental Restorative Materials." The purpose of this conference was ostensibly to make recommendations to the NIH and NIDR on the safety of dental materials. The NIH/NIDR could then decide if any of their recommendations or conclusions were to be implemented or used. With regard to the mercury question, the panels' conclusions contained the following statement "Although mercury vapor is released from dental amalgam, the quantities released are very small and do not cause verifiable adverse effects on human beings." A conclusion incidentally that was contrary to the scientific evidence presented to the panel. The Associated Press article that was released following the completion of the conference resulted in newspaper headlines all over the country that read "The Mercury From Tooth Fillings Doesn't Pose Hazard, Panel Finds."