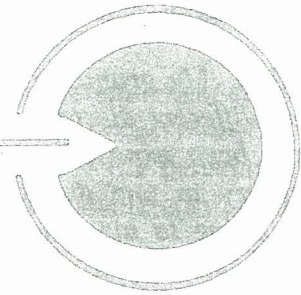


# BIO-PROBE

# NEWSLETTER



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## DENTAL MERCURY INTRODUCED TO U.S. CONGRESS

On 18 July 2000, the Government Reform Committee of the United States House of Representatives conducted a hearing entitled "Mercury in Medicine - Are We Taking Unnecessary Risks?"

Although the major thrust of the committee has been the use of mercury (thimerosal) in vaccines, an introduction to the subject of dental mercury was heard. A brief presentation was given by H. Vasken Aposhian, Ph.D. of the University of Arizona. Dr. Aposhian, while not minimizing concerns over the use of thimerosal in vaccines, presented documentation that dental amalgam is the largest contributor of mercury to the body burden of non-occupationally exposed individuals.

The Chairman of the Committee, Republican Dan Burton of Indiana, made several important points in an Opening Statement. Representative Burton stated: *"We all know that mercury is a toxic substance. Long term exposure to low levels of mercury has been linked to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, and central nervous system disorders. We assume that the FDA would protect our children from exposure to any level of mercury through drugs. But that hasn't been the case. The FDA recently acknowledged that in the first six months of life children get more mercury than is considered safe by the*

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*EPA.....My grandson received vaccines for nine different diseases in one day. He may have been exposed to 62.5 micrograms of mercury in one day through his vaccines. According to his weight, the maximum safe level of mercury he should be exposed to in one day is 1.51 micrograms. This is forty-one times the amount at which harm can be caused.....The FDA continues to allow mercury-containing vaccines to remain on the market. Today, over eight thousand children in America may be given a toxic dose of mercury in their vaccines."*

Chairman Burton went on to say: "*We have also been contacted by many individuals who have concerns about mercury in dental amalgams. While this is not the focus of today's hearing, it certainly warrants discussion as well.*"

Chairman Burton then related the FDA activities on mercury, pointing out that thimerosal had originally been labeled GRAS ("Generally Recognized As Safe"). However, when FDA conducted their OTC (Over The Counter) drug review in 1998 they changed their minds on mercury compounds being considered GRAS. On their web site, FDA states "*lead, cadmium, and mercury are examples of elements that are toxic when present at relatively low levels.*" Chairman Burton concluded: "*How is it that mercury is not safe for food additives and Over the Counter drug products, but it is safe in our vaccines and dental amalgams?*"

A number of individuals testified against the use of mercury in vaccines. Further, written testimony on vaccine and amalgam mercury were placed into the Congressional Record of the Committee Hearing. Representatives of FDA and CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) firmly stood their ground, with the argument (repeated at every approach from the Committee) that there was not sufficient data

available to discontinue the use of thimerosal in vaccines (Does that sound familiar?).

Will the Committee continue to investigate the use of mercury in dental amalgam? That remains to be seen, and depends on the conviction of the members of the Committee. The presentation by Dr. Aposhian, and the written testimony placed on record, are merely the opening. However, the very fact that the topic has been introduced to Congress is very exciting and presents great potential. It is extremely important that those providing information to the Committee do so in a rational manner, without appearing too radical. This opening is much too valuable to risk alienation of the committee and its members.

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#### U. S. SENATE

#### HEARS ANTI-FLUORIDE TESTIMONY

Dr. J. William Hirzy, the Vice President of EPA's Scientist Union testified against fluoridation to the Subcommittee on Wildlife, Fisheries and Drinking Water of the United States Senate on 29 June 2000.

The EPA union includes toxicologists, biologists, chemists, engineers, lawyers and others defined by law as professionals.

Dr. Hirzy provided the Senate Committee with documentation connecting fluoride exposure to adverse effects on the central nervous system and to bone cancer. He also pointed out a 1997 study by the National Institute of Dental Research finding that 66% of American children in fluoridated communities show visible signs of fluoride toxicity, and provided research references linking fluoride exposure to hyperactivity-attention deficit disorder, autism, and bone fractures in young athletes and military personnel. These are conditions found to be on the rise in America.

Dr. Hirzy also cited three landmark court cases against fluoridation and provided documents that many countries in Europe and elsewhere