

NATURAL HEALTH SERVICES

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Silver-Mercury Amalgam Dental Fillings

By Keith Post, ND

A common source of heavy metal toxicity is the mercury contained in silver-mercury amalgam dental fillings. It has been estimated the mercury found in just one of these fillings contains enough mercury for the FDA to declare a 4 acre body of water unsafe! Do you really want this in your mouth? Some dentists will tell you that replacing them prematurely exposes you to more toxicity than if you simply leave them in. I disagree. There are several holistic dentists in the Portland area that have taken special training in order to minimize your toxic exposure during amalgam removal, using suction devices, special dental dams, etc. Contact me and I will be happy to provide you with a list of holistic dentists.

The potential for mercury toxicity from dental fillings increases dramatically after age 40. This is because as the body ages, the stomach begins to make less and less hydrochloric acid, which is essential for digesting the protein component of the food we eat. As this is happening, the body does its' best to compensate by causing the salivary glands to manufacture salivary juices that are more acidic than before (saliva is normally alkaline in order to begin the digestion of starches in the mouth).

Here is the crux of the problem. As the saliva becomes more acidic, the likelihood of gradual leeching of minerals from the amalgam fillings increases. I think of this process as if it were a "ticking time bomb," because the process is so gradual that you or your doctors may not readily associate your dental or other health problems with this gradual poisoning. One common problem that occurs is the destruction of the nerve innervating the tooth that has been filled. This will often lead to the necessity of a nerve root canal procedure at a later date. Also, since your teeth are in your head, you can probably count on eventually experiencing some neurological or mental problems. Finally, there is evidence that mercury becomes incorporated into the tissues of the various internal organs, decreasing their effectiveness over time. This can be more difficult to chelate out and it will have to be done gradually over a fairly long period of time while monitoring its excretion into the urine.

Here are some symptoms from the homeopathic materia medica that may indicate that you are experiencing mercury toxicity, although insidious poisoning is often relatively free of symptoms. The tongue may be swollen, flabby and indented with scalloped ridges or other unusual formations due to taking imprints of the teeth. The gums may be swollen, spongy and bleed easily, with offensive breath and excessive salivation. Other potential dental symptoms may include periodontal disease or receding gums with tooth pain. There may also be a tendency towards canker sores on the tongue, lips or inside of the cheeks. There is often an intense thirst, especially for cold drinks. Also, the tongue may lack coordination in its' movements.

From the orthodox materia medica, acute mercury poisoning causes inflammation anywhere along the gastrointestinal tract, burning mouth pain, salivation, abdominal pain, vomiting, colitis,

decreased urination or blood in the urine, Chronic mercury poisoning, on the other hand, can cause gingivitis, neurological deficits and mental disturbances.

Orthodox medicine relies on chelating agents, such as penicillamine, which is a hydrolytic degradation product of penicillin. Also used is dimercaprol. Naturopathic physicians, on the other hand, are relying on measures such as systemic detoxification through a variety of means and magnesium glycinate. I also advocate the use of systemic enzymes fortified with serrapeptase for all people, although there is no research to date that it aids in chelating mercury out of the body. It does, however, do an excellent job of reversing atherosclerosis, reducing inflammation and increasing immune function.

Let me just make mention of how important proper nutrition is for dental health. Landmark medical anthropological fieldwork was carried out in the early 1930s by Dr. Weston A. Price, DDS (1870-1948), a nutritionally oriented dentist. He located and studied 14 different isolated indigenous cultures subsisting on a traditional diet of natural, organically grown whole and unrefined foods rich in essential nutrition. Without exception, all exhibited straight, well-spaced teeth free of cavitation, strong bodies, excellent resistance to disease and almost no trace of the degenerative diseases that typically plague civilized societies today. Their diets, which contained no refined flours or sugars, were found to be four times richer in the water-soluble vitamins, calcium and other minerals and at least ten times the amount of fat-soluble vitamins derived from animal sources, such as butter, shellfish, fish eggs and organ meats. In fact, it is interesting to note that many of the tribes would prepare both the husband and wife for childbearing with even more of the special foods high in animal fats. Also, children would be spaced far enough apart to enable the mothers to fully recover any vitality lost during childbearing.

To read more about Weston Price's fieldwork, read Nutrition and Physical Degeneration, available through International Foundation for Nutrition and Health, <http://www.ifnh.org>.

And, for more information on the toxicity of mercury, here are some website addresses to visit:

www.toxicteeth.net

www.amalgam.org

www.mercola.com/

www.hugnet.com/

www.holisticmed.com/dental/amalgam/

www.nccn.net/~wwithin/amalgam.htm

www.lef.org/magazine/mag2001/may2001_report_mercury_1.html

www.dentalmaterial.gov.se/Mercury.pdf

This article was written by Keith Post, ND, a board-licensed physician practicing in the Portland, Oregon area and is available online at <http://naturalhealthservices.info>. A list of mercury-free dentists in the Portland area is also available upon request.