



Mercury in Dental Amalgam Fillings

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to mercury mercury in dental amalgam fillings?



- Mercury and mercury compounds are on the [Proposition 65](#) list because they can cause birth defects or other reproductive harm.
- Exposure to mercury during pregnancy can affect brain development and cause learning and behavior problems for the child.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about significant exposure to [listed chemicals](#).

What is dental amalgam?

Dental amalgam, commonly known as “silver filling,” is a dental filling material that consists of about one half mercury (a metal) and about one half other metals, including silver.

How does exposure to mercury in dental amalgam occur?

- Mercury exposure occurs by breathing low levels of mercury vapors and swallowing during:
 - ▶ Placement or removal of dental amalgam fillings.
 - ▶ [Teeth grinding](#) by people who have dental amalgam fillings.
 - ▶ Eating and gum chewing by people who have dental amalgam fillings.
- During pregnancy, mercury can pass from mother to baby when:
 - ▶ The mother has amalgam fillings put in or removed.
 - ▶ The mother has amalgam fillings and grinds her teeth.

How can I reduce my exposure to mercury in dental amalgam ?

- ✓ Have regular checkups and talk to your dentist about good oral hygiene practices.
- ✗ If you have dental amalgam fillings that are in good condition, avoid having them removed.
- ✓ If you need a tooth filling, talk to your dentist about the characteristics, including the strength and longevity, of other restorative materials such as resin composite, porcelain, and gold alloys.
- ✓ If you have amalgam fillings and grind your teeth, talk to your dentist about possible remedies (such as a mouth guard).

What does the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) say about mercury in dental amalgam?

The FDA:

- Considers dental amalgam fillings safe for adults and children age six and above.
- Recommends that pregnant women and parents with children under age six discuss their concerns with their dentist.

For more information:

Mercury in Dental Amalgam Fact Sheets and Resources

- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - Dental Amalgam Fillings
<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/dental-devices/dental-amalgam-fillings>
- European Commission. Department of Health and Food Safety
 - Public Health. Tooth Filling Materials
http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/opinions_layman/en/dental-amalgam/l-3/3-mercury-exposure.htm
- US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)
 - Mercury in Dental Amalgam
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/mercury-dental-amalgam>

Dental Oral Health

- California Dental Association (CDA)
 - Oral Health Fact Sheets
<http://www.cda.org/public-resources/patient-fact-sheets>
 - Amalgam
https://www.cda.org/Portals/0/pdfs/fact_sheets/amalgam_english.pdf
- California Department of Consumer Affairs
Dental Board of California
 - The Facts About Fillings
http://www.dbc.ca.gov/formspubs/pub_dmfs2004.pdf

General Mercury Information

- US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)
 - Mercury
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury>

Proposition 65

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - Proposition 65: Background
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq>
 - Proposition 65: The List of Chemicals
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals>
 - Proposition 65: Fact Sheets
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets>