Mercury in Dental Amalgam Fillings

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to 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 exposures 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 from 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.
  - Chewing gum and eating by people who have dental amalgam fillings.
- During pregnancy, mercury can pass to the 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 check-ups and talk to your dentist about good oral hygiene practices.

⚠️ If you have dental amalgam fillings that are in good condition, avoid removal of them.

✔ If you need a tooth filling, talk to your dentist about the characteristics, including 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 6 and above.
☑ Recommends that pregnant women and parents with children under age 6 discuss their concerns with their dentist.

For more information:

**Mercury in Dental Amalgam Fact Sheets and Resources:**
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
  - About Dental Amalgam Fillings: [http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/DentalProducts/DentalAmalgam/ucm171094.htm](http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/DentalProducts/DentalAmalgam/ucm171094.htm)
- European Commission, Department of Health and Food Safety
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**Dental Oral Health:**
- California Dental Association (CDA)
  - Oral Health Fact Sheets (38 fact sheets in six different languages): [http://www.cda.org/public-resources/patient-fact-sheets](http://www.cda.org/public-resources/patient-fact-sheets)
  - Amalgam: [http://www.cda.org/public-resources/patient-fact-sheets](http://www.cda.org/public-resources/patient-fact-sheets)
- Dental Board of California

**General Mercury Information:**
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Mercury in Your Environment: [http://www.epa.gov/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](https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq)
    - Proposition 65: The List [https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals](https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals)