



Mercury and Mercury Compounds

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to mercury and mercury compounds?

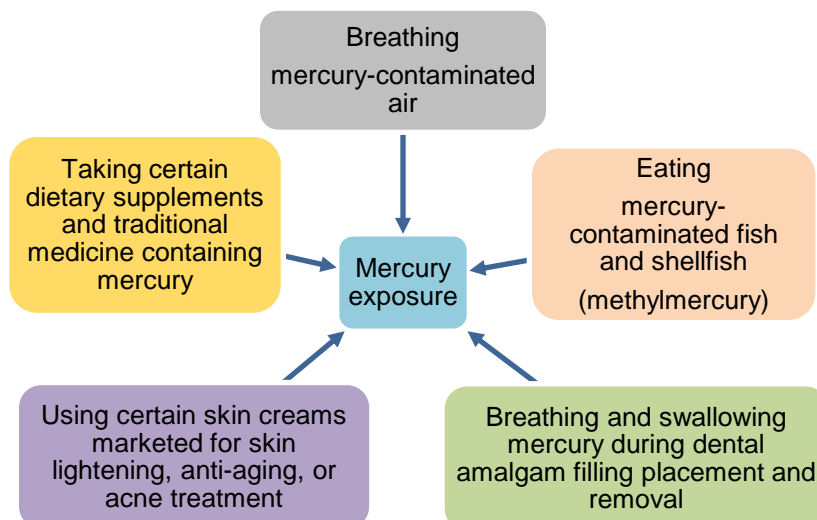


- Mercury and mercury compounds are on the [Proposition 65](#) list because they can cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. Exposure to mercury and mercury compounds during pregnancy can affect brain development and cause learning and behavior problems for the child.
- Methylmercury compounds are also on the Proposition 65 list because they can cause cancer. Exposure to methylmercury compounds may increase cancer risk and exposure 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 mercury?

- Mercury is a heavy, silver-colored, liquid metal. It is found in:
 - ▶ Certain types of [fish and seafood](#) (in the form of methylmercury).
 - ▶ Silver-colored dental amalgam fillings.
 - ▶ Fluorescent lights, including compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs.
 - ▶ Glass thermometers, older barometers, other gauges, and some batteries.
 - ▶ Some [skin creams](#) used for skin-lightening, anti-aging, and acne treatment.
 - ▶ Some dietary supplements and traditional medicine.

How does exposure to mercury and mercury compounds occur?



- During pregnancy mercury can pass from the mother to the baby.

How can I reduce my exposure to mercury and mercury compounds, including methylmercury compounds?

- ✓ Choose fish that are lower in mercury, such as salmon, tilapia, trout, canned light tuna, sardines, anchovies, and oysters.
- ✗ Do not eat fish or seafood that is high in mercury, such as tilefish, shark, swordfish, king mackerel, marlin, orange roughy, bluefin tuna, and bigeye tuna.
- ✓ When consuming fish that you, friends, or family catch, follow [OEHHA sports-fish advisories and safe eating guidelines](#).
- ✓ Follow the US Environmental Protection Agency's instructions for [recycling batteries](#), disposing of CFL [bulbs](#) and mercury [thermometers](#), and cleaning up [broken CFL bulbs](#) and [mercury thermometers](#).
- ✓ If you need a tooth filling, talk to your dentist about other restorative materials, such as resin composite, porcelain, and gold alloys.
- ✗ Do not take Ayurvedic medicines that contain high levels of mercury.
- ✓ Be aware that other traditional medicines and certain dietary supplements have in the past contained high levels of mercury. Avoid products that have mercury warnings. For products without warnings, consider contacting the manufacturer and asking if they contain mercury.
- ✗ Do not use skin-lightening, anti-aging, and acne treatment creams unless they have ingredients listed and you are certain that they do not contain mercury.

For more information:**General Mercury Fact Sheets and Resources:**

- World Health Organization (WHO)
 - ▶ International Program on Chemical Safety: Mercury:
http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/mercury/en/
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - ▶ Mercury in Your Environment:
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/>
 - ▶ Storing, Transporting and Disposing of Mercury in Your Home
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/storing-transporting-and-disposing-mercury-your-home#recycling>
- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
 - ▶ Public Health Statement for Mercury:
<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/PHS/PHS.asp?id=112&tid=24>
- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - ▶ Biomonitoring California
<http://biomonitoring.ca.gov/chemicals/mercury>

Mercury in Fish:

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - ▶ Mercury in Fish: Information for People Who Eat Fish:
<http://oehha.ca.gov/fish/hg/index.html>
 - ▶ Fish Advisories and Safe Eating Guidelines:
<http://oehha.ca.gov/fish.html>

Mercury in Products:

- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - ▶ Mercury in Batteries:
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/mercury-batteries>
 - ▶ How Do I Recycle? Common Recyclables:
<http://www.epa.gov/recycle/how-do-i-recycle-common-recyclables#bat>
 - ▶ Recycling and Disposing After a Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb Burns Out
<http://www.epa.gov/cfl/recycling-and-disposal-after-cfl-burns-out>
 - ▶ Clean up a Broken Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb:
<http://www2.epa.gov/cfl/cleaning-broken-cfl>
 - ▶ What to Do if a Mercury Thermometer Breaks?
<http://www2.epa.gov/mercury/what-do-if-mercury-thermometer-breaks>
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - ▶ Use Caution with Ayurvedic Medicines:
<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm050819.pdf>

Mercury in Skin Creams:

- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - ▶ Mercury Poisoning Linked to Skin Products:
<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm294849.htm>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
 - ▶ Mercury Poisoning from “Homemade” Skin Creams from Mexico:
http://www.ehib.org/ehib/www.ehib.org/papers/MercuryCream_5_1_14_for_Mexico_En.pdf

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 Chemical List:
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals>