

The Question of Mercury

Based on the text of a speech to a Dental Conference held in London,
about safety in Dentistry,

by

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The first time I saw mercury outside of a thermometer was in a tutorial of dental materials in the Cairo Dental School, in 1965, as we were being introduced to amalgam. The tutor then said to us, "Make sure you do not touch mercury with your bare hands as it is very poisonous." I asked him then, "If it is so poisonous, why are we using it, and why are we putting it in people's teeth?" He laughed at me with the rest of the class, as he told me that once mercury is mixed with the amalgam alloy it is locked there, and a new compound is formed. I believed him. I had to, for he was the tutor, he must be right, I thought to myself.

Like my colleagues, I used amalgam extensively after graduation, for it is easy to use, cheap, and just about the most convenient material for posterior teeth at that time. In the early 70's a new material was introduced, a white filling with many limitations called Adaptic, and I felt that I must use that instead of the ugly looking amalgam, on which one of my patients commented, as she looked in the mirror, "Oh, it looks worse than decay."

I worked for some time in the NHS of Great Britain, and, like many, I was obliged to use amalgam for all but the ones who opted for the better-looking white fillings, and who had to pay privately for them, for composite fillings were not, and still are not approved for use in posterior teeth.

When I was asked by one of my then NHS patients if there was any truth in that amalgam is harmful to one's health, I said that I could not see how it could be, since it is permitted by our most diligent controlling authorities, and that I was unaware of any problems resulting from amalgam. I told her that had amalgam been a health hazard, we would have seen it in a big way, since it is implanted in the mouths of almost all adults in the western world. That is what I thought then, and that is what many still think today, but I was to discover later, and mainly through my personal experience, that this is simply not true.

On suffering from some mild toothache, I asked a very good colleague of mine to have a look at my teeth. He enthusiastically looked, got the needle out, stuck it in me, and started drilling, and before I knew it, five of my teeth were filled with amalgam. I still remember that feeling as I walked on my way to my car. It was as if I was hit by one of those huge balls that they use to demolish buildings with, only I did not recall the moment of impact. I thought at that time that it must have been the anaesthetic that made me feel like that.

A few years later, I started having abdominal problems, belches that smelled of rotten eggs, diarrhoea, and a total loss of energy for the period up until I managed to empty my bowels. I saw many doctors, who would examine me, then pronounce me OK. No diagnosis and no treatment. A year and a half later, after I decided to take matters into my own hands and find out for myself what was wrong with me, I found out that it was wheat that was doing this to me, and to a lesser extent, cow's milk and its dairy products. When I avoided these, I had no attacks of that kind.

My health, however, started to deteriorate further. I started to suffer frequent colds, flu, sore throat, headaches, disturbed sleep, mood swings, and a creeping loss of energy. Thinking, which is my favourite past time, was becoming more and more difficult, as if there were a heavy fog in my brain. Like almost all amalgam sufferers, I failed to make the connection. I started to look again at the question of mercury. Could it be true that amalgam is a health hazard?

I read about it, and was shocked by what I read. Amalgam is not at all the stable compound we once thought, or were led to believe that it was. It loses its mercury all the time as can be easily proven, and where would it all go but mostly down into my body. If mercury is the highly toxic substance they say it is, then, despite all the denials, both I and many of my patients are being slowly poisoned. How could that happen! How could health providers continue to provide, knowingly or unknowingly, ill-health!

In the NHS of today, amalgam is mandatory for posterior teeth, and no choice is given to the patient as to composite fillings. The onus is almost totally on the Government to at least give the patient a choice, or make sure that the patient will not be harmed by amalgam and mercury (some are genetically more protected from the toxic effects of heavy metals than others) before introducing it to them. Patients are owed at least that much.

I know that composite fillings are more expensive and are certainly far more difficult to do properly, and are not all without health problems, and that it will cost a huge amount of money to replace the nations amalgam fillings. However, the savings in the NHS as a result of the unsuccessful attempts to deal with the health problems resulting from chronic mercury

toxicity, and the outcome of improving the health of the nation far outweighs the costs of decontaminating the nations mouths and bodies from mercury.

Let us now look together at amalgam. Not just mercury, but amalgam. We know that dissimilar metals create a galvanic current. With a few amalgams in your mouth, you have a whole battery in your head. Do we want that? The assault on the human body is not just by the mercury, but also by the silver and copper it contains. When I remove all of the amalgams for my patients they report immediate relief, especially from their headaches. Why is that? I suggest it is mainly because of the removal of that battery that has been bombarding their brains with such currents. That in addition to the fixing of the leaky mercury tap.

I would like to share with you some of my case histories. I can tell you about the patients who could hardly walk down my corridor, and who could run down it after removal. I can tell you about the pianist whom I thought, when I looked at her the first time, that she was going to die on me, and who was completely transformed into a new being after amalgam removal. She wrote me a letter saying that, for the first time since a very long time, she was able to "connect" to her music. I can tell you of the lady who had her amalgam removed somewhere but felt no better, so she was sent to me. When I examined her I found a speck of amalgam still there by the side of one white filling. I told her that I did not think that that speck would have caused her symptoms, but I will remove it anyway. A week after removal her husband came with her and asked me, "What did you do to my wife! Her depression has gone, and she is now back to the woman I married 30 years ago". I can tell you of the person who had traveled the world looking for a cure from his continuous headaches. He had every conceivable test, X-ray, scan... you name it, he had it. When he heard me speak about amalgam on TV, he thought, " I have tried everything, so let me try this one. I removed his amalgam and his headaches immediately stopped. I can tell you about the erosive lichen planus that was resistant to treatment, but disappeared soon after removal of amalgam. Some idiopathic forms of oral ulceration disappear after amalgam removal. Sore throat improves, sinusitis improves. I can tell you of the middle-aged lady who considered committing suicide because of her symptoms as life seemed to her not worth living anymore, and whose life was transformed after mercury decontamination. All my cases are well documented. Many of my patients also recorded their stories on video tapes that make for some compelling viewing, all can give evidence to their own stories.

The fact is that not one of my patients (most of whom find their way to me as a station of last resort), failed to improve in his or her health after the removal of amalgam. They all share the same experience, they all went to their doctors with particular complaints and were told, before or after

examinations and tests etc., that there was nothing wrong with them. Some were told that they needed psychiatric treatment, as they were more or less, imagining their symptoms! Why do all these symptoms fail to respond to any treatment modality other than the removal of amalgam?

I have another group of patients, whom you might call the controls. Those are the patients who had no complaints, or rather were not aware of any. All but one of them reported an improvement in their health in some way, especially in their energy level, after amalgam removal. One of them wrote to me saying "The windows were dirty, but I did not know."

These are not cases of magic; they are cases that strongly show a cause and effect relationship. I am really baffled that there are some, in fact there are many today, who still think that amalgam is safe!

No one can argue against the fact that mercury is one of the most poisonous substances on earth, or that mercury leaks out of amalgam fillings into the patient's saliva and his oral environment. It has been said that if a patient with amalgam fillings spends his day spitting his saliva down the toilet, with its dissolved mercury content, he would be breaking the law, but if he swallow it, he wont be!

There are a lot of people around who say that amalgam is fine, and patients are not harmed by it. I can tell you that that is not the case. Agencies, such as the EPA, WHO and others, that put an arbitrary figure of limits on mercury; EPA: 2 parts per billion in drinking water. FDA: 1 part per million of methyl mercury in seafood (Methyl mercury is said to be 100 times more toxic than elemental or inorganic mercury). OSHA, the occupational safety and health Administration, sets limits to 0.1 milligram of organic mercury per cubic meter of workplace air, and .05 mg/cubic meter of metallic mercury vapour for an 8 hours shift and 40 hour work weeks. The results of my tests with the mercury vapour analyzer clearly shows that, in some patient's mouths, the readings we see on our mercury vapour analyzer can be 20-40 times that much!

Other than amalgam, mercury toxicity can come from several sources, of which some awareness is required.

METALLIC MERCURY is used in industry to produce chlorine gas, caustic soda, in thermometers, in batteries, fluorescent tubes, etc. Metallic mercury evaporates very readily, giving off a colourless odourless gas. When inhaled it is toxic to the lungs, can be lethal in high doses, and from the lungs it is carried to the blood where it combines with erythrocytes, and is eventually transformed into inorganic mercury forms or organic mercury. Short-term exposure to a high level of mercury vapour can cause lung damage, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, hypertension, tachycardia, skin

rashes, and eye irritation. It can also cause a significant increase in mortality from stomach and lung cancer, as was the case with the Tuscany fur hat workers. It takes 4 seconds for mercury vapour to get into the circulation, and its half-life in the body tissues is about 80 days.

INORGANIC MERCURY comes from the reaction of mercury with other elements such as oxygen, chlorine or sulphur. It is water soluble, and therefore dissolves in saliva and is swallowed, causing damage to the GIT, and the kidneys. Inorganic mercury is used in many creams such as antiseptic creams, ointments, skin-lightening creams, and some vaccines. Mercuric chloride is now considered by the EPA as a possible human carcinogen, together with methylmercury.

ORGANIC MERCURY is formed when elemental mercury goes through a microorganism. It is the way the bacteria protect itself from its mercury load. I had, it seems, some of these bacteria in my guts, and they had a supply of mercury coming at them. They then use the reducible sulphur in such foods as wheat and whey to produce hydrogen sulphide as natural protection or natural chelators against mercury, as H₂S is a potent Hg chelator, pulling mercury out of anything. However, H₂S itself is very toxic, and is found to be 5 times higher in the faeces of ulcerative colitis sufferers, causing severe inflammation and impairing colon energy metabolism (by preventing butyrate oxidation and impairing respiration chain cytochrome C oxidase). Detoxing H₂S happens through methylation, thus producing along the way methylmercury, which is absorbed, and finds its way quickly to the brain and the CNS, impairing its function in a variety of ways such as memory problems, sleep disturbance, anxiety, depression, moodiness, irritability, tremors, lack of concentration, tiredness, headaches and fine tremors. Boyd Haley has shown that the changes in the brains of patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease, such as the effects on nucleotide binding proteins, are identical to the effect of mercury on brain tissue.

Another way the GIT protects itself is by encouraging the multiplication of the yeast candida albicans, as it blots out a lot of the mercury. However, this is not without a heavy price. Incidentally, Candida is very resistant to treatment unless you remove amalgam first.

There is also the depressive effect mercury has on the person's immunity. Some patients tell me that before they had amalgam removal, they used to suffer frequent colds or flu. There is also the effect on the formation and the tissue uptake of thyroid hormone, with the consequences of that. There is the effects on the vascular system. All of our patients report being told by other people that their faces were gray and have become more or less pink after the amalgam removal.

In conclusion, I would like to say to you that,

The use of mercury amalgam has been a grave historical mistake, and has deleteriously affected the health of all people, though some are more affected with it than others depending on their genetic constitution and other factors. I therefore call upon all of those responsible for the health of their people, here and every where, to ban the use of such a substance known for its extreme toxicity, especially when we no longer can justify its use on health related grounds.