

Heavy Metal Toxicity: The Silver-Mercury Dental Amalgam Issue Part 2

by David Zeiger, D.O.

Mercury is 5000 times more toxic than lead. Like lead, mercury affects the health of the body in many undesirable ways. Massive exposure from industrial or residential spills can cause immediate acute illness or death. It is the chronic long term exposure of small amounts that may contribute to chronic health problems.

The most common source of chronic low level exposure of mercury is from silver-mercury dental amalgams. These are composed of 50 percent mercury with silver-tin, copper, sometimes zinc, indium, and even small amounts of cadmium.

Not all people are equally affected by low-level mercury exposure from amalgams. Biological differences in salivary pH (acidity vs. alkalinity), background bacterial count in one's mouth, electrical charges from dissimilar metals, ie: gold and silver in teeth, chewing habits, use of alcohol, caffeine, and carbonated beverages all impact on the release of this noxious element into your body. Then your bodies own excretion mechanisms within cells in the liver, kidneys, and bowel will determine how much of the mercury enters into your metabolism, ie: nervous and or immune system.

Symptoms of mercury toxicity include:

- Paresthesias (numbness and tingling)
- Memory loss
- Fatigue
- Irritability, depression, anxiety
- Skin inflammation
- Tremors
- Insomnia
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Hallucinations
- Muscle weakness or poor coordination

When examining a patient for possible mercury toxicity, a physician, after taking a thorough medical history and physical, will not only review most routine laboratory tests, but also look into a urine analysis for heavy metals.

One of the leading laboratories in the Chicago area is **Doctor's Data™**. Hair analysis in this physician's clinical opinion is not reliable due to the fact that mercury exits in our air from the exhaust of cars and factories. Urine analysis therefore is more reflective of actual "oral/ingested" exposure. Having said that, mercury bonds very tightly to nervous, bone, and connective tissue, etc. Given an individual's excretion ability, even a baseline reading may not fully reflect ones absolute mercury load. Studies have shown that there is no

correlation between a given mercury load in a person and the person's intensity of physical and or psychological symptoms.

Physician and Dentist — A Team effort in Treatment

If there is a strong clinical suspicion that mercury poisoning is your problem, then a dentist (often referred to as a biological dentist) and physician trained in diagnosis and treatment of mercury amalgam toxicity will coordinate their efforts to maximize elimination of this health risk.

Prior to dental extraction of the amalgams, the patient is usually given oral chelating agents for a few weeks to help the body eliminate mercury.

Chelating agents go back to World War II when Army physicians were faced with munitions workers experiencing lead poisoning. One of the first chelating agents was, EDTA (ethylene diamine tetra-acetic acid). EDTA "wraps" itself around the lead molecule, locks it up, and allows the body to excrete it through the kidneys, and to some extent into the intestine then out via stool.

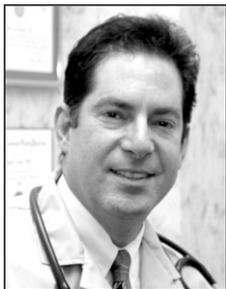
Today, some natural substances have been discovered to have mild to moderate chelating ability with heavy metals. Garlic, cilantro, and chlorella are a few. Antioxidants such as Vitamin C, glutathione, n-acetyl cysteine, and lipoic acid, such as found in **Oxitrol™** and **Ortho DTX™** from **Orthomolecular** are useful adjuncts to any heavy metal detox program.

Under a physician's care newer intravenous chelating agents like calcium-EDTA or DMPS (dimercapto-propanyl-sulfate) are the most effective agents today at removing mercury from your body. This intravenous injection is usually given in the same day following extraction of the dental amalgams. Your physician will also need to supplement you with oral minerals after the chelation since these agents will also remove some of the beneficial minerals your body needs, like magnesium, manganese, copper, and zinc.

Some intestinal bacteria, fungi, and parasites, even viruses, like *Helicobacter pylori* candida, toxoplasma, and herpes simplex, respectively, will thrive in a mercury enriched environment. Performing a comprehensive stool and salivary test will help detect these organisms from a company like **Diagnos-Techs™**. Then, in addition to chelation, your physician will design a program at the same time to eliminate these intestinal pathogens.

Each physician performing heavy metal chelation will design an individual program around your individual medical symptoms and physical findings. These treatment protocols are taught specifically to physicians through the American College for the Advancement of Medicine.

In addition, the biological dentist will



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work closely with you to choose biologically compatible composite dental material that will replace your old amalgams.

Finally, fatigue is often one of the major symptom complaints patients present with. The thyroid-adrenal gland is often affected by this toxin. In a future article I will discuss this in more detail.

Together a physician and dentist, experienced with mercury toxicity and its treatment, will work with you if mercury toxicity is contributing to your health problems.

To life and good health,

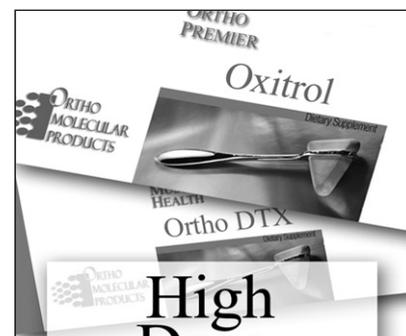
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Dr David Zeiger is a board certified family physician in private practice. He specializes in Integrative Medicine treating chronic/acute illness like IBS, Allergies, Women's/Men's health issues, Thyroid-Adrenal Syndrome, Hypertension, CFIDS/Fibromyalgia, Asthma, Diabetes, and Neuromuscular pain management.

He uses acupuncture, functional nutritional medicine, homeopathy, Chinese herbal medicine, neural therapy and ligament regeneration injection therapy.

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