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Mercury fillings are not safe

December 1, 2006

Dr. Coleman's comments about amalgam fillings today are incomplete and contain some inaccuracies. First, the FDA conclusions on amalgam safety were actually rejected by the independent panel by a two-thirds majority in October 2006. The panel had some harsh words for the FDA on limiting their scope of the studies they used to reach the conclusions presented and have recommended more study.

Second, the World Health Organization (WHO) does not find amalgam fillings to be safe. In fact in their 2005 report, they actually conclude: "Recent studies suggest that mercury may have no threshold below which some adverse effects do not occur."

Congressman Dan Burton conducted four years of congressional hearings on mercury, including testimony regarding dental amalgam. (Mercury amalgams are actually 50 percent mercury.) During the hearings, the FDA was asked how many scientific studies the FDA has on file showing ill effects of dental amalgam, and they stated hundreds. When asked how many they had showing their safety, they replied zero. There is a wealth of peer-reviewed scientific data on the detrimental effects to human health from mercury and mercury amalgam. It makes absolutely no sense to put the second most toxic substance on earth into the human body when alternatives are easily available.

The study Mr. Coleman refers to from the AMA journal showed no differences in IQ or kidney function only, and acknowledges that these long-term effects would require a longer-term study to be conclusive. The same study showed children who received amalgam fillings had significantly higher mercury urinary excretions than their counterparts. Researchers from the study he quotes were careful to say that long-term conclusions on safety should not be drawn from their study. Readers should be aware that there is no independent peer-reviewed study that concludes dental mercury amalgams to be totally safe.

When talking about durability and affordability, it should be noted that a mercury amalgam filling requires the removal of more live tissue than other options, leaving the tooth more vulnerable to fracture.

Fractures often result in root canals and crowns, and when those costs are factored in, mercury amalgam is no longer the most affordable. Sweden concluded, after a seven-year intensive study of dental amalgam, that there is no situation in which mercury amalgam is a necessary option, and they have banned its use.

For facts and research studies, folks should consult Web sites that offer actual science rather than opinion, especially from those with a financial interest. Visit the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology www.iaomt.org/ and www.mercuryfreehealth.org/.

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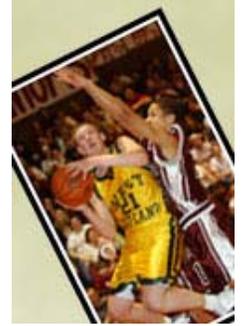
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