

Dental Amalgam as a Consumer Issue



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What is dental amalgam?

- A filling material that is 50% mercury
- Mercury-free alternatives are available



Concerns about amalgam:

Amalgam is a major source of mercury

- 226-322 tonnes of dental mercury is used around the world annually.
- The dental industry is one of the largest users of mercury in the U.S., accounting for 35 -57% of mercury consumption.
- About half of restored teeth in the U.S. contain amalgam.

Concerns about amalgam:

Amalgam releases mercury

- Dental amalgam releases mercury throughout its lifecycle, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- Higher exposure to mercury is associated with placement and removal of amalgam. Implanted in teeth, amalgam continues to release mercury vapor, with higher amounts released during mastication, gum chewing, tooth grinding, and brushing.



Concerns about amalgam:

Amalgam's mercury has toxic effects

- Mercury is a neurotoxin, reprotoxin, and nephrotoxin that is known to cause adverse health effects.
- Mercury can pose particular risks when exposure is high (and it can bioaccumulate from multiple sources), when individuals have reduced ability to remove mercury from their bodies, and when individuals are sensitive or vulnerable to mercury's toxic effects (like children).



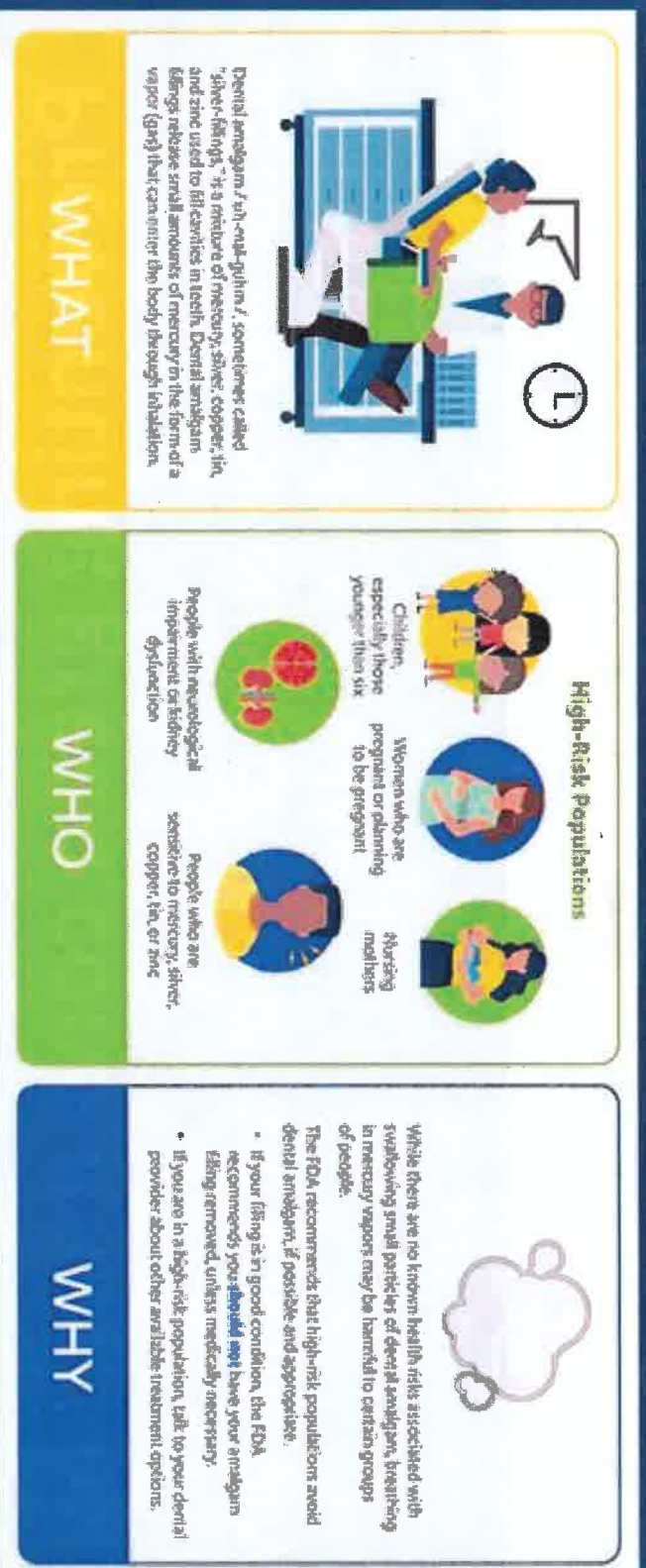
Amalgam as a consumer issue: **Misleading with the “silver” filling deception**

- Amalgam is often marketed as “silver fillings” (or “silver stars” in some pediatric clinics).
- Zogby polls show many Americans are not aware that amalgam’s main ingredient is mercury.
- As a result, amalgam is commonly placed without informed consent – and without assessing consumers’ risk factors (such as high pre-existing mercury exposure from fish consumption, skin-lightening creams, etc.)

Amalgam as a consumer issue: Ignoring FDA safety warnings

The U.S. FDA issued a safety communication warning against amalgam use in high-risk populations.

Dental Amalgam Recommendations



For more information, please visit www.fda.gov/dental-amalgam.

Amalgam as a consumer issue: **Damaging tooth structure**

Preparation for amalgam placement results in a greater loss of healthy tooth tissue than placement of mercury-free fillings, weakening tooth structure.



Amalgam's disproportionate impact on low-income consumers and consumers of color

- Amalgam is disproportionately used
- Amalgam disproportionately pollutes
- Amalgam poses disproportionate risks



Thank you

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