

First Steps, First Aid, for the Mercury Poisoned Person

By Leo Cashman, DAMS Staff

There are roughly three stages of recovery from mercury poisoning due to amalgam fillings. They are 1) preparation and planning for safe amalgam removal; 2) actual safe amalgam removal and removal of toxic crowns, toxic infected teeth, cleaning out jawbone disease, and dealing with other “dental revision” steps; and 3) detoxification and recovery following the completion of the dental revision. While the more aggressive and active detoxification should wait until stage 3 and should come after the dental revision, there is much that the patient can do to improve her/his situation in stage 1, in preparation for a safe and successful amalgam removal.

Stage 1 really starts as soon as the patient realizes that you are mercury poisoned or have other toxic dental hazards to address, such as toxic crowns, bridges, dentures or diseased jawbone to be remedied. The first thing to emphasize is that safe amalgam removal requires the use of a “holistic” or “biological” dentist and that a “regular” dentist is not apt to be able to replace amalgams safely enough. Amalgam removal is a great idea, but is only a good idea when elaborate protections are in place to make the process safe for the patient and for the dentists and staff who are assisting. The biological dentist is more likely to work well with the patient to determine the safest dental material choices and to work well with those materials.

First Aid for the mercury poisoned. The patient who is struggling with health issues and realizes he/she is to some extent mercury poisoned then asks: what can I do to alleviate this problem right now? The answers fall into the following categories: have a natural and organic diet, clean out other bad habits, and supplement with the vitamins and minerals you are likely to be deficient in. **Diet.** The diet part consists of eating helpful foods such as eggs, onions, garlic, and vegetables and fruit in general, especially if organic. Protein is important, as we need it to make glutathione, the body’s natural detox substance, and when we run low on glutathione is exactly when we become more noticeably mercury poisoned. Along with organic eggs, the best protein foods may be organic chicken and turkey, although beans are also good, except for soybeans. Fish is probably too risky for mercury, especially the larger fish. Stick to the smaller safer fish if you want to eat fish occasionally.

Bad foods include sugar, alcohol and caffeine, although anything that falls in the “junk food,” – chips, French fries, fried and greasy food in general, are to be avoided. Regular milk is also best avoided – it makes mercury harder for the body to deal with – but organic butter, especially raw organic butter, may be helpful. Don’t chew gum, don’t snack and brush teeth immediately following each meal (don’t wait a few hours).

Supplements. When mercury poisoning sets in, a person is likely to be deficient in vitamin C and the B vitamin complex, and the minerals magnesium, zinc and selenium. All of these should therefore be supplemented, but in the right form and in suitable amounts. So, until a health professional provides a more fine-tuned list of supplements, a good list of these supplements would be: **vitamin C**, as a mix of buffered ascorbates (such as Super Ascorbate C, by Twin Labs), **vitamin B complex** (such as Megafoods, don’t use a B complex with the B12 being cyano-cobalamine) **magnesium** as magnesium malate (or magnesium glycinate or magnesium citrate as back up choices), **zinc**, as zinc picolinate, and **selenium**, as seleno-methionine. The amounts would vary with the size of the patient but, for an average sized, say 150 pound person, it would be about 3,000 to 4,000 mg per day of the vitamin C; 400 to 500 mg per day of magnesium, 15 to 25 mg of zinc, and 100 to 200 mcg per day of selenium. This targeted supplement package would be more helpful than taking, for example, a typical multi-vitamin which would likely have too much calcium (which is antagonistic to the magnesium needed) and might have a cheap form of vitamin B12. Another likely deficiency for some is **vitamin D** and,

except for people who are getting outside in the summer outfits, making vitamin D from the sun, a daily dose of cod liver oil, so as to get 2,000 to 4,000 IU of vitamin D daily is likely to help. If there is any sign of not breaking down food in the stomach well, then **Betaine HCl** may helpful in digesting a meal. **Hydrochloric acid** is also likely to be deficient, and so picking up a supplement of Betaine HCl (betaine hydrochloric acid) at the health food store is a good idea. You would take the food enzymes before every meal and take the HCl prior to every protein meal (e.g. eggs, meat, beans). These supplement ideas do not really detoxify you from mercury, but they may help you feel less sick from mercury poisoning. The vitamins and minerals should be continued on through the amalgam removal state and through the detox stage, stage3.

Anti-fungal program. We have separate articles about this but, suffice it to say, the anti-fungal program can start now if, like most mercury sufferers, you harbor fungal overgrowths in some parts of your body: e.g. big toe, skin rashes, vaginal yeast infections, sinus infections, and intestines (causing indigestion and bloating even after a “good” meal). In brief, the anti-fungal program is: 1) restricted diet with no sugary or yeasty foods, and 2) anti-fungal supplements, such as olive leaf extract, monolaurin, caprylic acid, grapefruit seed extract (each time to run out of a bottle, you buy a different anti-fungal supplement, so you keep rotating it). No drugs!

Spring water that has no fluoride added and that is naturally low in fluoride (call ask about measured fluoride levels in the spring water – you are looking for 0.2 ppm or less fluoride in your water). Make sure you buy *spring* water, not just *drinking* water; *drinking* water is just tap water that has been filtered and, if that tap water had been fluoridated, then the filtration did not take out the fluoride.

Lifestyle. Some people need to quit smoking, some need to get away from a moldy house or a toxic workplace. Everyone needs to minimize EMF exposures, and cell phone use should be reserved for emergencies only. Sleep in a dark bedroom, with no lamp cords or electric clocks plugged in; all plugged in electric cords give off an alternating electric field that interferes with proper sleep: the pineal gland does not produce its hormone, melatonin, when it is over-stimulated at night by those electric fields. Mercury needs to wreck a good night’s sleep anyway, but let’s not let EMFs and alternating electric fields add to that problem.

If you have serious concerns about possible “sick home” problems, a “building biologist” in your area may be able to do an assessment in your home for mold, chemical problems, carbon monoxide, and electric field, magnetic field and radio frequency (RF) pollution. Making the recommended changes can help make a big difference.

Testing for mercury poisoning. Testing for mercury poisoning is not necessary in order to be determined to get your amalgams out. Amalgams produce too much mercury exposure for everyone who has them and, so, it is just plain smart to get them out – if it is done safely. However, testing is fine, as long as it is a meaningful test and a safe test. Unfortunately, much of the testing for mercury is flawed and, all too often, it can produce adverse side effects, as with the chelation challenge tests that require the use of a powerful drug like DMSA tablets. The Tri-test is probably the most meaningful, most sophisticated test we now have, and it is safe – no drugs are involved. Tri test uses three (“tri”) specimens from the patient: hair, blood and urine. See the ad for Quicksilver Scientific, which carries the test. Available through a doctor only.

Moving into Stage 2, amalgam removal. To get into stage 2, you are picking a dentist. For details on picking an appropriate dentist and for a protocol for safe amalgam removal, see your DAMS Information Guide and your list of DAMS professional members (mostly dentists) in you state.