The Dental Amalgam Controversy

Dental amalgam is a mixture that includes mercury, silver, tin and copper. It has been used for silver fillings for decades, however its safety has been the subject of much debate. Over time, small amounts of mercury vapor are released from silver fillings. Low levels of inhaled mercury vapor are generally not considered harmful to most people. At high levels, however, mercury exposure can have toxic effects. At the center of the controversy are claims that exposure to the mercury vapor from silver fillings can cause a variety of health problems, including MS.

Below are some studies that have been done on the relationship between amalgam fillings (AMFs) and MS:

- A summary of 10 studies suggests mercury exposure from AMFs may increase the risk of MS.
- A Canadian study found neither the number of AMFs nor the duration of exposure to them increases the risk of MS.
- Italian researchers also reported the risk of MS is not increased by the number of AMFs or the duration of exposure to them.
- Investigators in Taiwan found no association between MS and AMFs.
- AMFs may cause health problems in high risk groups, including people with MS. Non-mercury treatments should be considered.
- AMFs are not harmful to the general population. Individuals should consult with their dentist to decide which filling material is best.

Click on the logos below to view each organization’s full position statement. None recommend having AMFs removed unless medically necessary.