

Dear friends -- On September 6 and 7, two FDA panels of distinguished scientists convened for the sole purpose of addressing the neuro-toxicity of mercury amalgam. One panel was primarily physicians, the other primarily dentists, with an array of scientist-consultants added. All of them are credentialed in their fields, and all must pass FDA ethics requirements before being appointed.

The FDA staff presented a White Paper consisting of shopworn rhetoric, selected studies (some of whom were misinterpreted) and out-of-date conclusions about mercury toxicity; in short, the staff paper argued that mercury fillings are safe. By two votes of 13 to 7, this panel decisively rejected the FDA staff position. It is highly unusual for a panel to disagree with staff. The questions presented:

“Does the draft FDA White Paper objectively and clearly present the current state of knowledge about **the exposure and health effects related to dental amalgam?**”

Yes 7

No 13.

“Given the amount and quality of information available for the draft FDA White Paper, **are the conclusions reasonable?**”

Yes 7

No 13. [N.B.: Two-thirds of panelist says the position that mercury fillings are safe is not reasonable!]

After the vote, each panelist made a statement. Virtually all expressed concern in one or more of the following three areas: (1) the need for informed consent (real informed consent, telling about the mercury and its effects; (2) the need to stop usage for pregnant women and children (as Canada, Sweden, the U.K., etc., already do), and (3) the reality that a substantial number of persons are severely hypersensitive. Some highly intelligent and educated consumers testified that they had no idea that “silver” fillings are mercury – until it was too late. Please, please proscribe the term Silver Fillings, and make dentists say the “M” word when describing a material that is so full of mercury.

FDA is itself divided on whether mercury fillings are safe, meaning, in our regulatory system, they are not proven safe (there is no category between safe and unsafe). In short, then, **our government can no longer guarantee American parents and young women that mercury fillings are safe for their children and babies.**

The solution is obvious -- we need an immediate ban on mercury fillings for pregnant women and children under seven -- the Health Canada model. From there, we work to put mercury fillings into the dustbins of history.

Charlie Brown

Sept. 14, 2006

Attached -- *Los Angeles Times* article re FDA vote

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