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Freya Koss
March'1998
after having a tooth drilled
& filled with mercury amalgam



Freya Koss
April'2002
Four years after removal of
amalgam & detox

Looking for the Silver Lining

When a Wynnewood woman tried to convince doctors and dentists that her dental fillings had poisoned her, they told her the symptoms were all in her head. Much of the world disagrees.

by Judith Trustone

When Congressional hearings on the dental use of mercury are held this month, Freya Koss, 60, of Wynnewood, will be watching with special interest. The former event planner, now director of development for Consumers for Dental Choice, claims that an amalgam "silver" filling gave her mercury poisoning, and she now wants to alert the public to this "medical genocide."

When Koss visited a new dentist for the first time four years ago, she was unaware that the filling he had given her was more than half mercury, the most toxic substance known after plutonium. While attending a ballet performance a week later she became dizzy and was suddenly struck with double vision while

attempting to drive home. Weeks of tests culminated in several misdiagnoses- first lupus, next multiple sclerosis, then, when her eyelid began to droop, myasthenia gravis. Top area docs told her, "You'd better get used to being sick for the rest of your life."

Swallowing tears and donning an eye patch, Koss searched the Internet for answers, finally learning from an English woman that she had experienced the same symptoms a week after having amalgam dental work. "A shock ran through me as I recalled that exactly seven days before the double vision, I'd had a large, silver filling drilled out and replaced with a new one." Koss says. "This was my first clue that I might be suffering from mercury poisoning." Koss was astonished to find more than 150 websites of doctors, dentists, scientists and consumers claiming that several auto-immune diseases and others illnesses including asthma, allergies, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, periodontal disease, eye and skin conditions, Alzheimer's Disease, ADD and mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety and suicide are all medically linked to mercury poisoning from amalgam fillings.

A movement to ban amalgam appeared to be evident in several European countries, and in Canada, 8,000 claimants had sued the national dental association. Concern about mercury in this country has been limited to recalling thermometers and warning pregnant women and children not to eat fish, due to their mercury content. Last month, the United Nations' Global Mercury Assessment Working Group met in Geneva to hear testimony from nearly one hundred countries on the health and environmental hazards of mercury.

Koss' research led her to organizations of mercury-free dentists, holistic doctors, toxicological scientists and educated consumers. Among them was a holistic, mercury-free dentist in Scranton, PA, who, over a period of several months, carefully removed her amalgam fillings replacing them with white composites. An integrative physician familiar with the symptoms of mercury poisoning helped her safely detoxify. "Today I feel reborn, Koss says. "My energy is incredible, my brain fog is clearing, I regained my equilibrium, and I feel better than I have for years," though she still suffers a mild but constant double vision and ocular muscle weakness. "Without the help of these doctors and support groups," she says, "I would no doubt have capitulated to mainstream misdiagnoses, and might now be seeing life from a wheelchair." Yet, when she presented scientific evidence linking mercury from amalgam fillings to autoimmune disease to her former neurologists, they all said, "There's no scientific evidence." One even threw the information into a wastebasket without even glancing at it.

Focusing on the agencies mandated to protect public health, Koss began a long journey through the government's bureaucratic maze, discovering that no one, not even the FDA, had ever tested the safety of amalgam; it was accepted early in the 20th century as the standard of practice. Still, Koss and many others believe the American Dental Association is lying to dentists and consumers about

the health risks of amalgam. The ADA has never proven its safety. "I feel sorry for dentists," Koss says. "They think they're helping people when, in fact, they're harming them, their office workers and themselves." Yet, the ADA and state dental boards can take away the license of any dentist who tells their patients that amalgam might endanger their health.

Two years after amalgam was introduced in the mid-19th century, physicians first began describing symptoms of what we now call multiple sclerosis. One study showed those afflicted with MS had 25 times the mercury in their cerebrospinal fluid as those without MS. After proper removal, there's an 85 percent remission rate in MS cases. Koss' efforts to get government agencies to examine the use of mercury in dentistry radicalized her. Her non-profit Washington, D.C. based organization, Consumers for Dental Choice, headed by former West Virginia Attorney General Charles G. Brown, has provided support for legislative and legal actions against state and national dental associations.

Scientists here and abroad claim that exposure to mercury from a pregnant woman's teeth passing through the placenta to the fetus' developing brain and mercury preservative in infant vaccines contributes to the current epidemic of autism in American children. Despite the government's assurances to the contrary, Congressman Dan Burton (R-IN) is a believer. Chairman of the Committee for Government Reform, Burton watched "as the lights went out" in his autistic grandson's eyes after being given multiple vaccines. From 1929 until last year, vaccines contained Thimerosal, a preservative containing more than half mercury. Burton was outraged at a June hearing about the continued use of mercury in infant vaccines 20 years after the FDA first learned of the problem. In 1992 the FDA took Thimerosal out of dog vaccines and contact lens solutions because of "risk." Burton is now calling for criminal penalties against the FDA and any government agency that knew about the danger and did nothing. Parents of autistic children have been seeking government accountability on the matter for years. Though a minority voice within the government, Burton has threatened to use his subpoena power to address the issue. "We have to keep making the case and getting the message to a broader audience so people will ask why and change will take place." Burton and Rep. Diane Watson (D-CA) have introduced a bill to abolish the use of mercury in dentistry by 2006 and to warn against use of amalgam in pregnant women and children. ADA reaction to the Watson Bill states, "Watson's attempt to ban dental amalgam would effectively deprive patients of an essential treatment that is clinically and scientifically substantiated to be safe." Charles Brown of Consumers for Dental Choice says common sense disproves this assertion: "What pregnant woman, who won't even have a glass of wine, would want a known neurotoxin in her system?" Koss, who has spoken with Burton, says the only difference between the cover-up of Thimerosal (which began in c.1930) and amalgam (which began in c.1830) is "100 years more of deception and lies by the ADA and U.S.

government health agencies."

Where To Turn

- * www.algonet.se/~leif/AmFAQigr.html: amalgam-related illnesses, FAQs from Sweden, data base on mercury and related health effects.
- * www.altcorp.com/TESTFoundation/amalgampage.htm: scientific peer-reviewed research and rebuttal of ADA's statement to Committee for Government Reform
- * www.amalgam.org: Dental Amalgam Mercury Syndrome site for consumer info, holistic dentists and doctors
- * www.bioprobe.com: scientific studies, discussions, updates
- * <http://emporium.turnpike.net/P/PDHA/mercury/iaomt.htm> International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology's safe protocol for amalgam removal.
- * www.toxicteeth.org: Consumers for Dental Choice site for legislative news and state action by state.

The Institute for Natural Dentistry (holisticdentists.com) offers a comprehensive curriculum for traditionally-trained dentists integrating traditional and holistic dental concepts of diagnosis and treatment.

Reporter Judith Trustone, also recovering from mercury poisoning from amalgam fillings, says she no longer suffers from chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, sinus infections, headaches, allergies, swollen glands, sore throats, depression or 10 years of low-grade fevers since having her amalgam removed