



# DENTAL AMALGAM BY PROTECTING ORAL HEALTH WE PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

## Should I remove the dental amalgam fillings I already have?



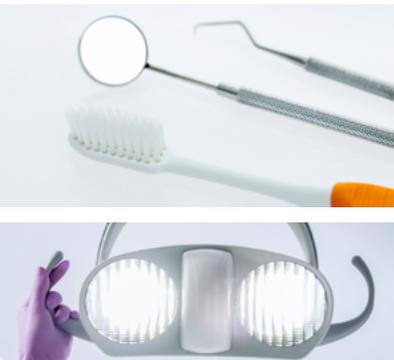
No. The European Commission experts' opinion notes that this is unnecessary. Moreover, their removal is to be avoided because it usually leads to the creation of a larger cavity. Dental amalgam still remains an excellent choice of filling material and many of those fillings, which have been in your mouth for a long time, need no replacement. Discuss with your dentist who will explain what is the best treatment choice for your oral health.

## How can I avoid the need for fillings?

**Tooth decay is preventable. This means that you can absolutely eliminate the need for fillings.**

### To achieve that:

- We adopt healthy dietary habits, eliminating sugar consumption from food, drinks and beverages.
- We practice good oral hygiene habits (brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between our teeth using floss or other interdental cleaners).
- We schedule regular dental check-ups every 6 months.
- We carry out frequent dental consultation for tooth decay preventive measures, like fissure sealants and fluoride varnish.



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## What is dental amalgam?

Dental amalgam is a reliable restorative material used by dentists to make the silver-coloured fillings. It is a mixture of silver, copper, tin, zinc and mercury. It has been in use for over 150 years and is considered to be as one of the best, safest and most durable dental restorative materials.

## Is it true that the use of dental amalgam fillings is being decreasing?

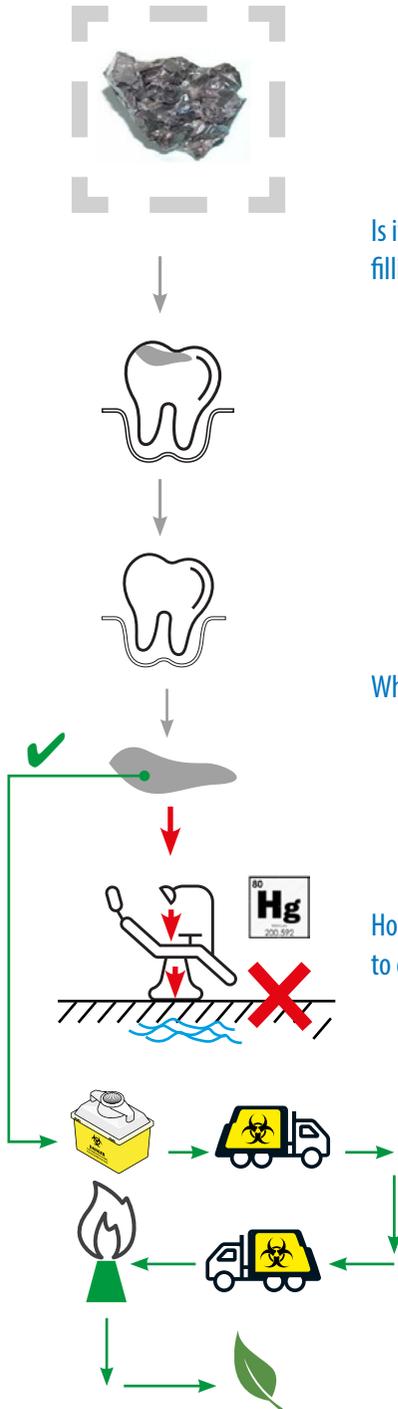
Yes indeed, its use is being gradually decreasing for esthetic reasons - as newer, tooth-colored materials are preferred - and, recently, for environmental reasons. Since 2015, with the United Nations Minamata Convention against mercury pollution, there has been a global effort to reduce the environmental contamination caused by mercury. In compliance with this treaty, all devices, compounds and materials containing or using mercury (i.e. thermometers) must be banned immediately, unlike dental amalgam which - due to its insignificant environmental impact - may be used until 2030.

## Why are dentists called to protect the environment?

During placement or removal of amalgam restorations, an amount of residue goes through the sewage system into the sea and soil, releasing waste mercury compounds in the environment.

## How will dentists contribute to environmental protection?

Pursuant to the new EU regulations, the number of amalgam fillings will be gradually phasing down aiming ultimately to phase out the use of mercury in dental amalgam preferably by the year 2030 and all dental facilities must be equipped with amalgam separators for the retention and collection of amalgam particles, therefore preventing waste amalgam entering the waste stream. Further scientific research and testing of new alternative restorative materials is needed, before amalgam can be completely replaced.



## Are dental amalgam fillings safe for health?



Yes. They are safe and durable. International Institutions and Organizations, such as the European Associations, the American Association, the Canadian Association and the World Dental Federation, as well as the findings of top researchers' clinical studies, confirm the safety and reliability of amalgam restorations. The Council of European Dentists underlines that the restrictions on the use of dental amalgam are being brought in for mainly environmental reasons, as there are no health risks posed by its use.

## How is my dental treatment affected?



The enforcement of the Minamata Convention may affect the option of the restorative materials of your dental treatment, in the future. Since July 1st 2018 dental amalgam fillings are no longer used in deciduous teeth, children under 15, pregnant or breastfeeding women, unless deemed necessary by the dentist. For all other patients, dental amalgam restorations continue to be a treatment alternative.

Furthermore, dental amalgam fillings are still particularly appropriate and remain the best treatment modality when treating patients with behavioural problems and in dental treatment under general anesthesia.

## Should I continue to receive dental amalgam fillings?

In certain circumstances a dental amalgam filling still remains the most appropriate treatment of choice to achieve a safe and satisfactory outcome. Your dentist will inform you on the pros and cons of various types of filling materials, he/she will explain their use and how well they might work in your mouth. An agreed treatment can then go ahead with your informed consent.

