



**Mercury
Policy Project**



Media advisory for 1 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 5

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Advocates to petition for ban to protect pregnant women from mercury tooth fillings, as FDA holds first public hearings in 13 years, Sept. 6-7

Press conference call set for 1 p.m. Eastern on Tuesday, Sept. 5

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Leading up to the first public hearings in 13 years on the safety of mercury tooth fillings, advocates intend to file a petition with the FDA next Tuesday, Sept. 5, calling for an immediate ban on use of mercury tooth fillings in pregnant women, to protect the development of their unborn babies. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, under pressure from medical researchers and consumers, will review the neurotoxic health hazards of mercury from dental tooth fillings at public hearings on Sept. 6 and 7 in Gaithersburg, Md.

A press conference call has been set for 1 p.m. Eastern on Tuesday, Sept. 5, to discuss the petition to the FDA. Mercury tooth filling manufacturers have advised dentists in the past against use in pregnant women. Canada, Britain, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and several other countries already have similar bans or warnings on using mercury tooth fillings in vulnerable groups. A U.S. EPA study says as many as one American baby in eight – up to 600,000 babies a year – is born with an unsafe level of this toxin because of mercury in the mothers' bloodstream.

In light of these facts, members of Consumers for Dental Choice, the Mercury Policy Project, and the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), will file their petition on Tuesday, Sept. 5 with legal status under the Food Drug & Cosmetic Act. The FDA has six months to respond. Meanwhile the ban requested will be the centerpiece of testimony to FDA panels next week by eminent medical researchers who believe that mercury fillings pose an unacceptable risk to the pregnant women and their babies.

The researchers will testify as public witnesses, although severely restricted by the FDA to only 3- to 10-minute presentations. The Mercury Policy Project will present new research documenting the neurotoxic effects of mercury on female dental assistants that, in turn, was likely passed on to their offspring during their pregnancies. In addition, researchers representing the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT) will be joined by public interest lawyers, policy experts, members of Consumers for Dental Choice, and other citizens who report serious health problems from their mercury fillings. The hearings start at 8 a.m. next Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 6 and 7, at the Holiday Inn in Gaithersburg, Md.

The telephone press conference on Tuesday, Sept. 5 at 1 p.m. Eastern will feature these speakers:

- **Charles Brown, general counsel for Consumers for Dental Choice.** Earlier this year Brown filed the lawsuit *Moms Against Mercury vs. FDA*, helping prompt the hearings.
- **Michael Bender, MS, director of Mercury Policy Project,** who has recently investigated reports of health effects of mercury on dental nurses, in particular.
- **Dr. Boyd Haley, PhD, professor and former chairman of chemistry, University of Kentucky,** on how the mercury in tooth fillings affects the body.
- **Dr. Richard D. Fischer, DDS, FAGD, FIAOMT, a practicing dentist in Virginia** and past president of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology.

For call-in instructions, accredited journalists only should contact Peter Kelley at 202-270-8831, or peter@kelleycampaigns.com. For more information, please see the sponsoring organizations' websites at <http://www.mercurypolicy.org/new/documents/WhatPatientsDontKnow.pdf>, www.toxicteeth.org/fact%20sheet2006.pdf, and www.iaomt.org/infoDoctors.cfm.