



Dental Amalgam - Information for Pregnant or Breastfeeding Patients

What is dental amalgam?

Dental amalgam is a silver coloured material commonly used to fill decayed teeth. Amalgam is a mixture of metals including mercury and is a strong and long-lasting filling material.

Is Dental Amalgam Safe?

Yes, dental amalgam fillings have been used for more than 150 years. Scientific Evidence has repeatedly shown that amalgam fillings do not cause any harm to health.

What is the concern with Dental Amalgam?

The concern with dental amalgam is environmental. New regulations in the European Union (EU) restricting the use of mercury came into force in 2018. These restrictions on the use of dental amalgam aim to help reduce environmental mercury pollution and are **not a result of any safety concerns about amalgam fillings** for dental patients.

Why have I been given this information?

Since you are pregnant or breastfeeding, the new regulations apply to you as due to these new regulations, dental amalgam is no longer allowed for the treatment of pregnant or breastfeeding women, unless the dentist thinks that it is necessary.

How can I decrease the use of Dental Amalgam?

The best way to avoid the need for amalgam fillings is to prevent tooth decay in the first place. To do this:

- Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Follow healthy eating advice especially with regards to sugars to help prevent tooth decay.
- Treatments such as fluoride varnish and sealants can be used to prevent or stop decay in the early stages.
- While most dental treatment during pregnancy is safe, your dentist may advise postponing certain complex treatment such as surgery until after the birth, unless it is urgently required, for example, if you are in pain. If you need a filling when pregnant or breastfeeding, there are materials other than dental amalgam that your dentist can use. He/she will discuss these with you to agree on the best option.

What about the amalgam fillings I already have?

If you already have amalgam fillings, there is **no evidence to suggest that these are harmful to you or your baby's or infant's health**. Unless your amalgam fillings are broken or there is further decay, and urgent treatment is required, your dentist will not remove or replace them.

If you would like further information or have any concerns, please speak to your dentist.

This leaflet has been developed by the Health Amalgam Advisory Committee. This and other patient information is available on the Department of Health Regulation website.