

United Concordia's Statement on Dental Amalgam

AS A RESULT OF conflicting stories being circulated, questions about amalgam and composite restorations are being asked more frequently in dental offices nationwide. The issue is only complicated by groups and individuals who are privately motivated—whose main purpose may not be to benefit oral and overall health.

According to many in the industry, dental amalgam is the most thoroughly researched and tested dental material of all those in use today. Although it contains mercury (a known toxin), when this element is bound to other components of amalgam, it becomes safe for use.

In 2006, government-funded studies further concluded that there is no evidence that dental amalgam causes brain injury or neurological problems in children. Similar supportive statements have been released by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the Alzheimer's, Pediatric, Autism and Multiple Sclerosis Associations.

In fact, a recent independent survey of over 950 scientific and medical studies support amalgam's unbeatable strength, safety and cost-effectiveness. The ADA Research Foundation also notes that it is the "strongest and most durable direct restoration for large load-bearing restoration on posterior teeth."

Although an alternative to amalgam, composite restorations release formaldehyde—a known carcinogen—in addition to a number of other components questionable to overall health. In addition, posterior composites are more costly and wear out more quickly. The main advantages of composite materials are the adhesive systems that bond the material to tooth structure and the aesthetics of being tooth-colored.

United Concordia will continue to monitor scientific research and studies as we maintain our commitment to providing members with affordable, quality oral health care benefits. For more information on your plan benefits, please call United Concordia's Customer Service at 1-800-332-0366.

