

Newsmax

Prevent Mercury Intake to Stop Heart Disease

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One of the most ignored links to heart failure is mercury. People are exposed to mercury from a variety of sources:

- Dental amalgam
- Atmospheric mercury
- Mercury-containing vaccines (as with flu vaccines)
- Seafood containing high levels of mercury

Most people are exposed to a number of these sources for a lifetime. Mercury accumulates in the body, so tissue and organ mercury levels rise with each exposure. It's true that some of the mercury is continuously excreted, mainly in the feces, but much is re-absorbed and recirculated from the gut only to be redeposited in tissues and organs, such as the heart.

Several recent studies have linked increased consumption of mercury-laden seafood with cardiovascular disease and cardiac death.

One study followed 2,005 men who were free of heart disease at the time of the study and were matched for all known heart-risk variables. The study found that men who had the highest concentration of mercury in their hair (the top 25 percent) had a 60 percent higher risk of death from heart disease and a 70 percent overall higher risk of cardiovascular disease than those with the lowest body burden of mercury.

The study was conducted by a team led by Dr. Jukka T. Salonen of the Research Institute of Public Health at the University of Kuopio in Finland. The men were followed for 12 years and subjected to a number of cardiovascular tests, including measures of the buildup of atherosclerosis plaque. It appears that high mercury levels increase atherosclerosis.

Furthermore, these studies have concluded that mercury contamination in seafood can counteract the beneficial effects of the omega-3 oils. In a newsletter I mentioned the work of Dr. Jane Hightower, a physician practicing in San Francisco, who found high levels of methylmercury in her cardiac patients, especially those consuming swordfish, Chilean sea bass, and albacore tuna.

The EPA safe limit of one microgram/gram appears to be the cutoff point at which the beneficial effects of the omega-3 oils are overridden by the toxicity of the mercury. Dr. Hightower found levels of 22 micrograms/gram in her patients eating swordfish frequently.

The Finnish study found levels as high as 15.7 micrograms/gram. Even the American Heart Association admits that methylmercury from fish can increase cardiovascular diseases, yet they recommend people eat albacore tuna, which has levels of mercury that are three times higher than those found in light tuna. So what fish have the highest levels, and which ones should you avoid?

- Swordfish
- Albacore tuna
- Tile fish
- Shark
- King mackerel

While most of these studies looked at seafood as the source of the mercury, others have targeted dental amalgam fillings, which contain almost 50 percent elemental mercury, as the worst offender.

Mercury from recommended vaccinations is never mentioned, even though the flu vaccine for seniors contains a full dose of mercury.

Because mercury appears to play a major role in both heart attacks and heart failure, steps should be taken to reduce the level of mercury in the body. This involves chelation and removal of the mercury as well as detoxifying the metal.

Those with dental amalgam fillings should have them removed, in my opinion, by a trained dental specialist. Chelation should be postponed until the amalgams are removed.