



World Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry
Alliance Mondiale pour une dentisterie sans mercure
Всемирный альянс за стоматологию без ртути
Alianza Mundial por una Odontología Sin Mercurio
التحالف العالمي لطب أسنان خال من الزئبق
世界无汞牙科联盟



The Transition to Mercury-Free Dentistry in Africa

II. Superior to amalgam, the alternatives are 21st-century dentistry for Africa.

Technological improvements in the alternatives over the past two decades have made them available, affordable, and effective. All dentists know how to place the alternatives, and most younger dentists always choose mercury-free fillings. The most common mercury-free fillings are composite (also called resin), glass ionomer (also called GIC or glass ionomer cement), and compomer.

Today, mercury-free alternatives are superior to dental amalgam.

- *Mercury-free fillings preserve tooth structure;*
- *Mercury-free fillings can help prevent future caries;*
- *Mercury-free fillings are long lasting;*
- *Competent dentists can do alternatives as quickly as amalgam.*

Mercury-free alternatives are safe, says the European Commission Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks and studies by dozens of other agencies and scientists.

Mercury-free fillings are tooth-friendly, amalgam is tooth unfriendly. Amalgam is a colonial relic which requires removal of good tooth matter, creating weaker teeth and the need for future repairs. By contrast, the alternatives are tooth friendly.

Glass ionomers are child-friendly: atraumatic restorative treatment (ART) does not require a power drill, or an electrical source. Hence ART can be done in remote villages where electrical service is intermittent.

Composites are technically superior to amalgam, preserving the tooth rather than removing good tooth matter, and easier for future repairs, making them a better price in the long run.

Mercury-free fillings eliminate environmental costs of dental mercury: When environmental costs are factored, dental amalgam is much more expensive than mercury-free fillings. Most African countries lack the systems for collection, sorting, safe transport, and treatment of mercury wastes. Prolonged phase down will increase the problem of environmental mercury pollution in Africa.

The smartest, cheapest and, safest choice – the sustainable choice – is mercury-free dental fillings!