

WHAT'S UP DOC PETE?

I read in the newspaper last month that there was a possibility of mercury contamination at Lake Nacimiento. For many years I have enjoyed the waters of the lake with my friends and this article concerned me. Is there a problem with mercury toxicity and what can it do?



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The report on the Lake and surrounding creeks will not be released until this Fall. However, if the levels in the lake are high enough they could affect your health through drinking the water, absorbing it through the skin or eating fish from the lake. There is a big problem with mercury overload; this is why the FDA issued warnings to pregnant mothers not to eat certain types of fish that may have high mercury levels. There is also a strong association with amalgams (silver fillings) and mercury overload in the body.

In an article I published, "*Mercury Elimination with Oral DMPS, DMSA, Vitamin C and Glutathione – An Observational Clinical Review*", I describe in detail how tissue mercury levels in humans have increased over the past fifty years to an alarming concentration. The cause of this increase in tissue mercury levels is a variety of environmental exposures and accumulation in the body over time. The implications of chronic low dose mercury exposure resulting in high tissue mercury levels appear to have a direct effect on cellular metabolism and development.

Some conditions that have been indicated to chronic high tissue mercury levels are autism, Alzheimer disease, autoimmune diseases and cardiovascular diseases. Studies have demonstrated the degeneration of the neurite membrane, similar to the plastic insulation of an electrical wire, with exposure to mercury vapor. To see this amazing study on video go to <http://movies.commonscalgary.ca/mercury>. After seeing this it is easy to understand how devastating mercury exposure can be. Another study demonstrated that the fetus could have 70% higher blood levels of mercury than the pregnant mother. In the United States during the year 2000, over 300,000 newborns were exposed in the uterus to levels of methyl mercury higher than those allowable by the U.S. EPA recommendations, placing these newborns at risk for adverse neuro-developmental effects.

Concerns about high tissue mercury levels as a contributory factor to various disease states has motivated clinicians to attempt to decrease these levels. Various methods of mercury detoxification have been undertaken with differing results. If you choose to have your amalgams removed it is very important to have it done properly. Improper removal of amalgams can increase mercury levels in the blood and tissues causing adverse effects. In my next column I will discuss how to determine if you have high levels of mercury and how to decrease this load in order to decrease your risk for developing disease.



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