

Safe Dental Amalgam Removal

Why remove your amalgam Fillings?

For patients with chronic fatigue, cognitive decline (or strong Family History of dementia), immune suppression and chronic infections, multiple chemical sensitivity, multiple autoimmune conditions and neurological problems, chronic toxicity can be a prominent root-cause. Environmental toxin exposures can include:

Mycotoxins: Mould toxins, often from water damaged buildings.

Heavy metals: From lead pipes, ingestion of high mercury fish and dental amalgam.

Halides: From chlorinated water, general anaesthesia and flame retardants.

Pesticides / herbicides: From non-organic food sources.

Although many people are able to cope relatively well with the daily toxin burden, others (due to high exposures, nutritional deficiency or poor pathways for detox genetically), may become symptomatic as essential biological processes become affected by high toxin burdens. Mercury, in particular, can have numerous health risks and although it used to be thought that dental amalgams were safe and inert, studies have shown that a small amount of mercury can be released from your fillings every time you chew.

The cornerstone of effective detoxification practices always starts with removal of the source of toxicity. Filtering water, switching to organic foods and low mercury fish, remediation of water-damaged buildings and eating a nutrient-dense diet designed to enhance detox can really help. However, when present, removal of amalgams is also a key step to reducing overall toxin load – helping to ‘switch off the flow’ of heavy metals (silver, mercury and nickel), into the body.

In addition to reducing the constant exposure to heavy metals, removal also opens up the option of supporting natural detox pathways with the amazing antioxidant and detox support Alpha-Lipoic-Acid (ALA). Unfortunately, due to the nature of ALA and its ability to mobilise and support detoxification of mercury, the use of ALA with dental amalgam in situ (even a tiny amount), is strongly advised against. This is because of the possibility of mercury being transported from the teeth into the bloodstream and beyond.

ALA is an essential tool for the re-generation of our body’s natural ‘chelator’ (*kee-lay-tor*), glutathione. We use it to help the body effectively detoxify mycotoxins, halides, pesticides and metals. We have seen many of our patients massively benefit from detox support with ALA – but before it can be used, you must be amalgam-free (for at least 3 months). This means that for many of our chronically sick patients, becoming amalgam free is an essential foundational step for recovery.

How can Amalgam Removal be Safe?

Unfortunately, drilling into amalgam (silver fillings containing around 50% mercury), will cause rapid release of both mercury vapour and production of fine amalgam particles that can be inhaled or swallowed. In typical dental practice (where dentists have been told and believe that

exposure to amalgam is safe), the standard removal protocols can cause large spikes in blood mercury levels and in our clinic we have seen patients who have experienced autoimmune flares (MS relapse, facial vitiligo), new onset arrhythmias and recurrence of childhood seizures following unsafe removal of amalgams. For some patients, concerns about the risks or removal means that they choose to hang onto old, often crumbling, amalgam fillings for as long as possible.

However, concern about dental mercury exposure is growing and many countries have banned further use of dental amalgam. The UK is due to join them on 1st January 2025! Unfortunately, this will not deal with the decades of old, slowly decaying fillings still in people's mouths.

Fortunately, there have always been dentists who are ahead of the curve and who have worked hard to try to make the process of amalgam removal as low risk as possible. In response to the huge need, the SMART technique (Safe Mercury Amalgam Removal Technique), was developed. At Functional Nexus we feel indebted to those dental Practitioners who have bravely acknowledged and try to rectify one of the huge historical mistakes of their profession (in the face of the BDA advice that amalgam is safe), and are willing to support patients who choose to opt for safe amalgam removal.

What is the SMART technique?

Rapid mercury vapour clearance with a high-volume air filtration system should be used in the room.

A barrier to cover the face, neck and clothing is used to reduce contamination

The nose should be fully covered and connected to a separate source of air (medical grade air is fine, oxygen is not necessary.)

A dental dam should always be placed around the tooth to prevent particles of amalgam from being swallowed and a saliva ejector should be placed under the dam to reduce the need for swallowing.

An oral aerosol vacuum should be placed 2"-4" from the patient's mouth. Continuous cold water and high-speed suction should be used.

Amalgam should be sectioned into chunks and removed in as large of pieces as possible using a small diameter carbide drill.

A Binder (charcoal or Toxaprevent clay), should be used to rinse with after removals.

Is this Technique 100% safe?

Despite the opinion of some dentists that this makes the process 100% safe, we do know from our very sensitive patients that there is nothing which will completely reduce the post-removal rise in mercury levels (even when all of the procedures above are followed perfectly). This is

largely due to teeth being porous and mercury from amalgam being forced down into the root and then the bloodstream during the removal process.

Therefore, we do not advise full amalgam clearance in one sitting and in chronically unwell patients would advise a trial of just one amalgam removal initially, to gauge response to the procedure. In general, we would advise single quadrant clearance as a maximum (up to 4 fillings in a sitting), with several weeks in between to allow mercury levels to settle. If there is any noticeable decrease in health after a single amalgam removal then it may be wise to slow the process further. We have seen an elderly gentleman have twelve amalgams removed in one sitting (with SMART technique), which rapidly developed a heart rhythm problem (Atrial Fibrillation), requiring hospitalisation.

Well and robust patients are unlikely to notice any side effects of the process, but for those with chronic fatigue, multiple chemical sensitivity, MS and epilepsy we advise routine caution. However, although there may well be short-term increase in mercury levels, long term the chronic leaking of mercury into the body will cease and there will be improved opportunities for Detox support.

Can amalgam removal really make a difference to my health?

Over my time dealing with chronic fatigue and chronic neurological problems since opening the clinic in 2016, I have found supporting effective detox of metals and mould to be one of the most effective mode of treatment for patients with tests showing chronic toxicity. One of my patients now enjoys walking by the sea – after spending 15 years bed-bound and in a wheelchair, others report huge improvements in memory and cognition after following our detox support advice.

There are always patients for whom amalgam removal is simply impractical or impossible (due to being house-bound or severe dental phobia. For these patients we can offer detox support – but there is no denying that this is far more effective when coupled with safe amalgam removal.

Checking for amalgam ‘Specks’

Although most SMART - accredited dentists will take every care to ensure all amalgam is removed, there is always a small chance that some can be left behind by mistake. We also often see that fillings which have been replaced with white composite in the past (by non-mercury aware dentists), often still contain a reasonable layer of amalgam underneath the white surface. Sadly (as the mercury can still travel into the tooth), the white cap does not ensure safety from ongoing mercury exposure.

Therefore, for all patients considering a formal approach to detox (or use of ALA for detox support), we advise a full check of the mouth to look for any signs of retained amalgam ‘specks’ if there are old crowns or white fillings that may have replaced amalgam. This requires a set of X-rays called **digital intra-oral bitewing x rays** to rule out any 'specks' which could have been left behind after the procedure.

In addition, after you have your amalgams removed via the SMART technique, we also advise X rays again - **BEFORE** any expensive / radio-opaque crowns etc. are placed on top. Sadly, for patients with old crowns fitted, there may be a need to remove and lift the crown to check underneath (as the X-rays can't penetrate many crown materials). WE understand that this can be a costly process – and may occasionally result in tooth loss and the need for implants or bridges. However, for some patients this may be a necessary step which can be discussed with your practitioner.

For effective Bite-wing X-rays, you will need 2 X-rays each side (2x Molar and 2x Pre Molar). Digital Intra-Oral Bitewings have very low radiation but some dentists are still concerned that this is an unnecessary radiation exposure. However, for those wishing to embark on ALA detox support, this step is essential and we can help you to find a dentist who understands these requirements if necessary.

If you have a set of Bite-wing X-rays that you would like to be independently reviewed for 'specks', our Functional Dental Associate Dr Ellen can offer remote advice from her dental practice in Sheffield.

Do I need to ask my dentist for any other special Treatment?

For our patients with signs of toxicity on testing, neurological problems, histamine/ caffeine sensitivity, anxiety, palpitations or chronic fatigue, we advise asking your dentist for **adrenaline-free local anaesthetic** – as we know that our more vulnerable patients are at much higher risk for developing unpleasant tremors, fast heart-rate and anxiety with the use of adrenaline. Many holistic/ biological dentists will already offer this as standard care, but do ask if you think you are in one of the risk categories above.

What do I need to avoid?

Regardless of what your dentist may think and however well-meaning they may be, please do NOT accept any of the following therapies with your amalgam removal:

- **Chlorella Tablets**
- **Glutathione (oral or IV)**
- **Alpha Lipoic Acid (ALA)**
- **Other binders with unknown ingredients** or special 'detox supplements' unless discussed with us first.

If you wish (and your dentist offers it), charcoal and IV vitamin C can be used alongside the Toxaprevent.

The Functional Nexus Dental Amalgam Removal Protocol

Preparation:

For at least 2 weeks prior to amalgam removal, maintain good cellular protection with mineral support and antioxidants as recommended by your Functional Medicine practitioner. This is usually minerals including zinc, magnesium and selenium as well as antioxidant support (usually vitamin E and vitamin C). Some elements of this may be in a Multinutrient preparation.

On the day BEFORE the dental visit:

STOP any Vitamin C (as this may interfere with local anaesthetic effectiveness). Take it after the procedure instead.

Keep taking the rest of the minerals and antioxidants recommended as usual.

After having the amalgam removed (with full SMART technique):

- Use Toxaprevent Sachet as a Mouthwash and gargle. Rinse and spit with ½ a sachet and then swallow the other half.
- Continue regular Toxaprevent use (1 sachet or 2 capsules), twice a day with a glass of water for 5 days after the procedure.

Toxaprevent is a medical grade clay that helps to catch heavy metals and safely lock them up for elimination in the stools. It must be taken an hour away from any other supplements or medications). Most patients find an evening dose before bed the easiest way to take the 2nd dose. It can be purchased from Natural Dispensary here:

https://naturaldispensary.co.uk/products/Toxaprevent_Medi_Plus_Sachets_30_s-15569-0.html

https://naturaldispensary.co.uk/products/Toxaprevent_Medi_Pure_Capsules_180_s-15568-0.html

Please remember:

Regardless of what your dentist may think. **We do not feel that any of the following are appropriate interventions following amalgam removal:**

- Chlorella
- Glutathione (oral or IV)
- Other binders with unknown ingredients.

Locating a Mercury Safe Dental Practitioner in the UK

IAOMT are at the forefront of support and training for dentists in safe amalgam removal techniques and are a non-profit organisation specialising in holistic and biocompatible dentistry. While we don't always agree with elements of their advice on detox, they provide us with the best trained dentists in the SMART technique.

You can search for an IAOMT-Certified Practitioner in the UK here: <https://iaomt.org/search-by-region/region/united-kingdom/>

The British Society for Mercury Free Dentistry also lists practitioners who work with Biocompatible materials and safe amalgam removal techniques:
<https://mercuryfreedentistry.org.uk>

If you can't find anyone near your location, clinics do exist who still follow the SMART principals but are not members of the above organisations. Try searching for 'Mercury free dentist + Your location'.

Please note that we are unable to comment on the standard of dentistry of the dentists on the above registries – we know only that these professionals have attended training on the SMART technique, and that they feel that mercury is a possible health Hazard to patients.

Patients often ask us whether their own NHS dentist (who they know and feel comfortable with), could do the job – and many will say they can use the SMART technique. However, this is rarely true as the high airflow filters and suction are rarely in the inventory of standard dental clinics. If in doubt, do call the clinic you are planning to use and run through the SMART checklist above with them. If they are not willing to engage with you (or are unable to answer questions on the SMART technique), it's unlikely they are truly offering the full service.

The Functional Nexus Dental Practitioner:

Dr Ellen is one of the few UK dentists who has also trained in Functional Medicine and shares our views on the effectiveness of Detox for chronic health conditions. She attends our Clinical CPD and is part of our essential Detox support team. Dr Ellen is one of our first recommendations for very unwell or complex patients with multiple amalgams and understands how important very safe and complete removal is to our treatment plans.

Dr Ellen is available for expert dental amalgam removal using the full SMART technique at her dental surgery in Dronfield (near Sheffield). Even if Dronfield is too far for you to travel, she is able to offer specialist Functional Medicine dental advice on the phone and can independently review your digital Bite-wing X-rays for signs of amalgam specks. You can call her clinic team on: **01246 412 699** or click the link below to find out more:

<https://www.snapehilldentalstudio.co.uk/team/dr-ellen-newton/>

Practitioners Recommended to us by Our Patients:

Dr Daniel Sutcliffe at The Bespoke Dentist (Harley St, London): <https://thebespokedentist.co.uk>

Dr Jeff Amos at The Clinic (Brighton, Sussex): <https://www.jeffamos.co.uk>

Dr Sebastien Lomas at Wonder of Wellness (Huddersfield, Yorkshire):
<https://wonderofwellness.co.uk>

Dr Ellen Newton at Snape Hill Dental Studio (Dronfield, Derbyshire):
<https://www.snapehilldentalstudio.co.uk/team/dr-ellen-newton/>



Need Further Support?

Our Clinic support team are always happy to help you navigate your treatment plan. However, for targeted detox support sessions our Detox clinical Lead Dr Rosie can offer consultations to advise you on all things related to amalgam removal and detox support. Do call our clinic team to book an appointment or