

A SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING
OUR PHILOSOPHY CONCERNING SILVER MERCURY FILLINGS
VERSUS RESIN-COMPOSITE (TOOTH COLORED) FILLINGS

Dear Friends and Family,

In the past few years there has been a great deal of controversy regarding the use of silver-mercury fillings or amalgams. Our office, long ago, decided to discontinue placing any silver-mercury fillings in our patients mouths based upon the following reasons:

- 1) Mercury, a toxic poison, can be released into the body tissues while chewing. Studies have shown that the presence of mercury fillings can cause an increase in mercury levels to the brain and other vital organs. This is important because it has become a concern that mercury may be linked to an increased risk for Alzheimer's and Multiple Sclerosis. In fact, our staff, due to their own health concerns, do not even wish to handle silver-mercury filling material in order for us to use it as a restorative material.
- 2) Amalgams have a lower wear resistance than "correctly placed" (tooth colored), resin fillings. New materials based on adhesive dentistry last longer and offer all the same advantages of amalgams without the drawbacks.
- 3) Amalgams break teeth! The primary reason there are so many crowns out there, is that amalgam fillings expand with time and cause teeth to break. When a tooth breaks, it usually results in a fractured cusp, which must be restored with an onlay or crown. A bonded (tooth colored) resin filling actually strengthens the tooth to nearly its original strength.
- 4) Amalgam fillings leak causing recurrent decay! Because amalgam fillings do not bond to tooth structure, there is a gap between the filling and the tooth. This gap provides a pathway for bacteria and acids to reach the dentin and cause decay. Under virtually every amalgam we remove, there is decay! Left untreated, this decay will destroy healthy tooth structure and could result in the need for root canal treatment. Since amalgams stain the tooth dark, early signs of micro leakage are undetectable. Composite resins actually bond to the tooth structure, creating a seal between the tooth and the filling. This seal reduces micro leakage and increases the life of the restoration.
- 5) Amalgams are less attractive in appearance than tooth colored fillings. Amalgams cause the tooth to appear gray from the front and stain teeth permanently so that in the future, additional healthy tooth structure may have to be removed in order to restore teeth to a more natural appearance.

It is for the forementioned reasons that we do not place silver-mercury fillings in our patients mouths. Our philosophy is to only place the type of dentistry that we would place in our own mouths.

Dr. Dawson and his family do not have any silver fillings in their own mouths, and we, in this office, truly believe this is the best decision for our patients' health and longevity of their teeth.

Please note that, although studies have proven that tooth colored fillings are the superior material, insurance companies do not fully compensate for the expense of these fillings. It is the patient's responsibility to pay for the amount that the insurance will not cover. Insurance companies want the patient to have the cheapest treatment possible and are more concerned about their "bottom line" than the quality of materials used, quality of treatment or for that matter, the health of the patient.

In our effort to focus on providing you with the best possible dental care at the fairest fees for all patients, payment for dental care is due at the time of your appointment. We accept cash, check, Visa, Master Card, and Discover. For those of you that need to be able to make monthly payments, we offer Care Credit. If you are interested in this finance plan, please ask for the brochures, which we have available for you.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Dawson, D.D.S., F.A.G.D.