



CAMPAIGN FOR

**MERCURY FREE DENTISTRY**

A PROJECT OF CONSUMERS FOR DENTAL CHOICE

Consumers for Dental Choice  
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14 July 2015

Mr. Mark T. Bertolini, Chairman, CEO, & President  
Aetna Inc.  
151 Farmington Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06156

Dear CEO Bertolini:

As dentists and other health professionals, we are concerned that many of Aetna's dental plans favor mercury-containing amalgam fillings while restricting the use of mercury-free fillings like resin composite, especially in posterior teeth. We do not use or recommend amalgam at all in our practices because:

- Amalgam damages teeth: Amalgam requires the removal of more healthy tooth tissue, weakens tooth structure, and can crack teeth as it expands and contracts – leading to higher dental bills later.
- Amalgam exposes people to mercury: Dental amalgam releases mercury, a neurotoxin. Children, the unborn, the hypersensitive, and dental personnel are especially vulnerable to the toxic effects of mercury.
- Amalgam pollutes our environment: Dental amalgam constitutes the largest amount of mercury in use in the United States today, and most of this mercury ends up polluting our air, soil, and water. Mercury pollution indisputably can cause health problems, especially for children and the unborn.

As Charlie Brown discussed with your vice president for dental and vision, the new Minamata Convention on Mercury recognizes the key role of insurers in preventing these problems. In Annex A, the Convention calls for "Discouraging insurance policies and programmes that favour dental amalgam use over mercury-free dental restoration" and "Encouraging insurance policies and programmes that favour the use of quality alternatives to dental amalgam for dental restoration."

Our patients are unhappy when told that their insurance plans mandate mercury-containing amalgam unless they pay out-of-pocket – a penalty many can ill-afford. We urge Aetna to stop penalizing our patients for choosing mercury-free dental fillings. As a forward-thinking leader in health insurance, will you end all restrictions on mercury-free fillings in your dental plans?

Sincerely,

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