

**INFORMED CONSENT (for amalgam replacement)**

Patient's name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Replacement of Amalgam Fillings**

Many patients want amalgam fillings replaced due to worry about potential toxicity from high mercury content (about 50%) of amalgam filling materials. Others are concerned that amalgam is ugly, and therefore opt for the newer composite fillings because of their beauty.

Yet another concern is tooth fracture. Adult American's teeth are cracking and breaking at an unprecedented rate, and evidence points to the common silver filling as the prime culprit. Many times these teeth require crowns, root canal therapy, or local gum and bone surgery to restore normal function after they have cracked or broken. Sometimes they must be surgically extracted (removed). Virtually always, we find that a cracked or broken tooth has a silver filling in it, with the fracture starting at and extending directly from the filling.

Amalgam fillings expand and contract with heat and cold at a different rate than does the tooth that holds them, causing microscopic cracks to form within the protective enamel covering. Add to this recipe the pounding force that teeth withstand each day from crushing and chewing food, and the result is an accident waiting to happen. Because of the tremendous expense and loss associated with this trend, we are now recommending to many of our patients over 30 years old, that the childhood silver-amalgam fillings in their back teeth be replaced with bonded composites.

NOTE FOR OUR INSURED PATIENTS: Insurance plans do not cover any replacement of amalgam fillings that is motivated primarily by concerns over toxicity, cosmetics, or prevention of dental fractures. Where the old filling is leaky and decayed, there may be a benefit for replacement with amalgam, providing partial benefits toward the fee for bonded composite replacement. Our office will explain your benefits to you.

**Benefits:** Bonded fillings strengthen weakened teeth and to help hold them together against the stresses of chewing, and in addition, the newly placed composite fillings are mercury free and are naturally beautiful.

**Common Risks:** Teeth with amalgam fillings may still require crowns or root canal therapy (because of harm already done), but the rate of complications is far lower if interceptive replacement is done before the onset of symptoms. At times, teeth are sensitive to cold or biting after the procedure. This usually resolves in a short time, but may persist in rare instances. In some cases where teeth are badly stained from the old amalgam, the dark stain may persist, limiting the esthetic results achievable by replacement of amalgam fillings.

**Consequences of not performing these procedures:** Statistics show that many teeth with amalgam fillings will fracture or decay. It is not possible to accurately predict how quickly or how severely your teeth will progress.

Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that your amalgam replacement is completed properly, although it is not possible to guarantee perfect results. By signing below, you acknowledge that you have received adequate information about the proposed procedures, that you understand this information, and that all of your questions have been answered fully. You also give permission for photographs or other information derived from your treatment to be used in clinical and economic research, practice marketing, and patient education activities and materials, provided that your identity is not reasonably discernible.

\_\_\_ I give my consent for the proposed amalgam replacement procedures as described above.

\_\_\_ I refuse to give my consent for the proposed amalgam replacement procedures as described above. I have been informed of the potential consequences of my decision to refuse treatment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient's (or Parent's) signature / Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff signature / Date