



Dr Angelo Lazaris is a leading expert in general and cosmetic dentistry. Using the latest state-of-the art technology and techniques, clients are assured of the most advanced treatment available. A contributor to top fashion magazines, Dr Lazaris has performed procedures on Channel Nine's Body Work and Fox 8's Australia's Search for the Next Top Model.

Mercury fillings and pregnancy

Question:

I'm currently 25 weeks' pregnant and have just been to the dentist for a check-up. My dentist has informed me that four of my fillings which are amalgam should be replaced. The fillings are over 20 years' old and have apparently cracked the teeth slightly allowing bacteria to get through under the surface of the teeth (with fillings).

What's your advice re: getting this work done whilst pregnant? I have been told that you have to be careful when removing these old fillings that mercury doesn't enter into my system thus potentially harming the baby! Is this true?

Answer:

Amalgam fillings are notorious for cracking teeth and these can eventually lead to painful and costly problems if left untreated. If they have caused fractures then I would be inclined to replace them too.

There is no real issue with getting this work done while pregnant IF adequate precautions are taken. The most important of these is the use of a latex dental dam. This is a barrier placed over the mouth that isolates the teeth to be worked on from the surrounding oral environment. Not only will it trap all amalgam before you can ingest it, but it is important in achieving the best results with composite fillings, particularly since the bond strengths of these fillings are quite sensitive to moisture contamination from saliva and even the humidity in your own breath.

I would ensure that my dentist used a rubber dam as a matter of course.