

WARNING

Heavy Metal Health Hazards

into our lives. These are not the only heavy metals, but they are the most common sources of heavy metal poisoning.

Mercury

Mercury is one of the most toxic substances we can be exposed to and we are exposed to it on a fairly regular basis. It is found in fungicides, pesticides, dental fillings, contaminated seafoods, thermometers and a host of products, including various cosmetics, fabric softeners, inks, tattoo ink, latex, medications, paints, plastics, polishes, solvents and wood preservatives.

Mercury can be absorbed through the skin or inhaled. It passes through the blood-brain barrier and is attracted to and absorbed by nerve endings. This neurotoxin lodges inside neuron cells disrupting cellular communication. It can cause autoimmune disorders, arthritis, blindness, candidiasis, depression, dizziness, fatigue, gum disease, hair loss, insomnia, memory loss, muscle weakness, multiple sclerosis, lateral sclerosis (ALS), Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, paralysis, lupus, food and environmental allergies, menstrual disorders, miscarriages, behavioral changes, depression, irritability, hyperactivity, allergic reactions, asthma, metallic taste in the mouth, loose teeth and more.

Remember those silver fillings that dentists put into your mouth? Well, they are really 50% mercury! Although the American Dentist's Association will do everything they can to deny that amalgam fillings can affect health, many European countries now completely outlaw the use of silver/mercury amalgam fillings! According to the World Health Organization, amalgam dental fillings are a major source of mercury exposure. Mercury fillings may be a contributing factor to many chronic, degenerative and autoimmune conditions, because many people with these conditions have had significant improvement to their health when they have been removed. It is important to note that a mercury detox program is usually needed after fillings have been removed.



Arsenic

Arsenic is famous as a toxin used to poison people as illustrated in the play "Arsenic and Old Lace." Considering this fact, it's a concern that arsenic is found in pesticides, laundry aids, cigarette smoke, table salt, seafood and contaminated drinking water. Acute arsenic poisoning creates symptoms such as confusion, convulsions, drowsiness and headaches. Toxic levels of arsenic can cause coma and death. Arsenic can also cause cancers. People working around pesticides, mining and metallurgical work are at high risk of developing high levels of arsenic toxicity.

It's always helpful to "know your enemy," so here are some important facts about the major heavy metals we're being exposed to, what symptoms they cause and how they are being introduced



Lead

Lead is one of the most toxic metals known. It's been many years since our society was made aware of the damage that exposure to lead-based paints was doing to our health, especially to young children who suck on and chew anything they can get their hands on.

When the lead reaches toxic levels in the body, it can damage the kidneys, liver, heart and nervous system. The body can't tell the difference between lead and calcium, so pregnant women, children and other people who are deficient in calcium absorb lead more easily, with infants and children effected most severely. Possible symptoms of lead poisoning include anxiety, arthritis, confusion, chronic fatigue, behavioral problems, juvenile delinquency, hyperactivity, learning disabilities, metallic taste in the mouth, tremors, mental disturbances, loss of memory, mental retardation, impotence, reproductive disorders, infertility, liver failure and death.

Exposure to lead can come from food that is grown near roads or factories, lead-based paint, hair products, food from lead-soldered cans, imported ceramic products (especially from Mexico and China), lead crystal glassware, ink on bread bags, batteries in cars, bone meal, insecticides, tobacco, lead pipes, and lead solder in the water pipes. If you suspect you could have lead pipes or lead solder in your water system, have the water tested.

Aluminum

Aluminum isn't technically a heavy metal, but it is a neurotoxin all the same as it can cross and alter the blood-brain barrier. Symptoms are the same as Alzheimer's disease and osteoporosis. Anemia, poor calcium metabolism, forgetfulness, gastrointestinal disturbances, headaches, liver and kidney function problems, memory loss, nervousness, speech disturbances, softening of the bones, and weak, aching muscles are some symptoms of possible aluminum toxicity.

Trace amounts of aluminum are not toxic, but we are exposed to an excessive amount in modern society. We can be exposed to aluminum through cookware, baking powder, toiletry items like antiperspirants and cosmetics, dental amalgams, medications (antacids), fertilizers and unfiltered water.

Cadmium

Cadmium accumulates in the body, replacing zinc, an essential mineral, in the liver and kidneys. Toxic levels of cadmium may cause anemia, loss of appetite, hair loss, high blood pressure, joint soreness, dull sense of smell and dry, scaly skin. Also, cadmium weakens the immune system by lowering the levels of T-cells (white blood cells that protect the body from foreign invaders and cancer cells) causing kidney disease and liver damage, cancer, emphysema and shortened life span. Cadmium can be found in cigarette smoke, plastics, nickel-cadmium batteries, drinking water, fertilizer, fungicides, pesticides, soil, air pollution, refined grains, rice and soft drinks.

