



MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
SINGAPORE



MH 70:44/19

MOH Circular No. 65/2022

23 May 2022

All Registered Dental Practitioners

## ADVISORY ON DENTAL AMALGAM

This Circular updates dental practitioners on the use of dental amalgam and supersedes MOH Circular No. 29A/2008.

### Minamata Convention on Mercury

2. The Minamata Convention on Mercury<sup>1</sup> (“Convention”) is a United Nations global treaty that aims to protect the human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.
3. The Convention was adopted at the diplomatic conference held in Japan on 10 October 2013 and has since been ratified by 137 countries (“Parties”). Having become a ratified Party to the Convention on 22 September 2017, the treaty entered into force for Singapore on 21 December 2017.
4. Singapore has adopted a phase-down approach on the use of dental amalgam, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Part II of Annex A of the Convention.

### Safe Usage and Management of Dental Amalgam

5. Dental amalgam may continue to be used as a dental restorative material in the absence of a suitable universal substitute. However, dental practitioners should make sure that all treatment options and decisions are based on best available scientific evidence, ensuring that the patient’s interests and safety are not compromised.
6. The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has provided recommendations about the use of dental amalgam in certain groups of people<sup>2</sup> who

<sup>1</sup> The text and annexes of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which entered into force on 16 August 2017, can be viewed at the official website: <https://www.mercuryconvention.org/en/resources/minamata-convention-mercury-text-and-annexes>.

<sup>2</sup> Pregnant women and their developing fetuses; women who are planning to become pregnant; nursing women and their newborns and infants; children, especially those younger than six years of age; people with pre-existing neurological disease; people with impaired kidney function; and people with known heightened sensitivity (allergy) to mercury or other components of dental amalgam.



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may be at greater risk to the potential adverse health effects of mercury exposure. Based on current scientific evidence available, it would be prudent to use alternative, non-mercury materials for dental restorations in special populations, where clinically reasonable.

7. The removal or replacement of sound amalgam fillings by alternative materials is not recommended.

8. Dental practitioners have a responsibility to ensure that the public safety, health and environment are protected through safe handling practices, proper waste management and appropriate disposal of mercury and dental restorative materials.

9. Dental amalgam is currently listed as a Class B medical device on the Singapore Medical Device Register (SMDR). Dental amalgam should only be used in pre-dosed encapsulated form. Amalgam waste must be properly stored, handled and disposed of in accordance with laws such as those administered by the National Environment Agency and the Ministry of Health, and any other existing laws.

10. For queries or clarifications on this Circular, please email [Dental@moh.gov.sg](mailto:Dental@moh.gov.sg) or [SDC@spb.gov.sg](mailto:SDC@spb.gov.sg).



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