



Circular No. (05/2021)

From	Department of Healthcare Professions / Ministry of Public Health
To	All licensed Dentists in the State of Qatar. All licensed healthcare facilities / focal points in the State of Qatar
Subject	Guidance on cessation of the use of Amalgam in dental practice in Qatar
Date	21 June 2021

Dear colleagues and partners,

The Ministry of Public Health is committed to supporting healthcare related practices that is eco friendly and have a positive impact on the environment. Qatar has pledged to enforce regulations, which are part of a worldwide agreement, to reduce global environmental pollution caused by mercury released during the production, use and disposal of mercury products, including dental amalgam. Therefore, in accordance with the decision of the MOPH Executive Board, it has been decided the following:

- Cessation of the use of amalgam fillings in all healthcare facilities that provide dental services, across the governmental and private sectors.
- Dentists should not replace previous amalgam fillings unless it is deemed clinically necessary, as there is no evidence that dental amalgam presents a direct health risk to individuals who have amalgam restorations.
- Removal of sound amalgam restorations can result in unnecessary loss of tooth structure and should be avoided. Therefore, any removal of existing fillings must comply with the following:
 - ❖ The patient must be informed of the potential risks of this procedure and must fill in a consent form that is signed and stamped by the dentist and the facility.
 - ❖ Dentists must maintain complete documentation of all cases that require amalgam removal, including comprehensive medical and dental history, necessary radiographs, and photographs of the tooth subject to treatment. This documentation should be made available to any government bodies that may request this as part of their audit process to monitor compliance.
 - ❖ All dentists should continuously work on keeping up to date and improving their skills regarding the prevailing alternatives to amalgam.



The Ministry of Public Health requires that all the concerned healthcare facilities/practitioners comply with the above mandatory requirement, action will be taken against non-compliant healthcare facilities/practitioners.

This circular is effective from 01/07/2021

For further information, kindly contact:

DHPRegistration: DHPRegistration@moph.gov.qa

Thank you for your cooperation.



Ceasing the Use of Dental Amalgam

The Ministry of Public Health have decided to cease use of amalgam for dental restorations in the State of Qatar from 1st July 2021.

This document provides further explanation of aspects of the restrictions on the use of dental amalgam for the dental team.

Why is Qatar ceasing the use of dental amalgam?

While there is no evidence that dental amalgam presents a direct health risk to individuals who have amalgam restorations, mercury from dental amalgam waste contributes to environmental pollution.

Qatar has a longstanding commitment to environmental responsibility, demonstrated as the fourth pillar in its National Vision 2030¹, wherein it emphasizes the importance in protecting the country's environment for its children and future generations.

Consequently, Qatar along with other nations from around the world have signed an International Treaty (The Minamata Convention on Mercury, 2017)² that aims to address human activities which contribute to mercury pollution, to which dental amalgam contributes.

The Minamata Convention recognizes that dental amalgam is a safe, durable and cost-effective material used by dental professionals and the measures being put into action in Qatar are purely for environmental protection and do not reflect any evidence-based concerns about adverse effects of dental amalgam on human health.

Furthermore, a National survey conducted to analyze practitioners readiness to cease dental amalgam usage among dentists in Qatar found that 78% of those surveyed do not use dental amalgam at all in their daily practice³.

Will I be able to use dental amalgam in my patients?

No. The Ministry of Public Health state that from 1st July 2021, dental amalgam use shall be ceased for the restoration of cavities for all patients and alternative restorative material should be used.

Which alternative dental materials will be available to place in my patients?

There is a wide range of restorative materials available for the dental practitioner. Alternative options to the use of dental amalgam include direct and indirect restorative materials.

Direct restorative materials include; composite resins and glass ionomer cements.

¹ https://www.psa.gov.qa/en/qnv1/Documents/QNV2030_English_v2.pdf#page=34

² <https://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/Booklets/COP3-version/Minamata-Convention-booklet-Sep2019-EN.pdf>

³ 239 respondents of 306 surveyed stated they do not use dental amalgam in their daily practice



Indirect restorative materials can be made from ceramics or precious metals such as gold.

What can I tell patients about the safety of dental amalgam?

Dental amalgam has been used for 150 years as a restorative material. Its safety and durability are well established, and it has been one of the most appropriate materials for a range of clinical situations, proven to be a durable, strong, loadbearing and a bacteriostatic dental material.

If there had been any perceived health risk associated with the use of dental amalgam, any restrictions on its use would have been both immediate and more stringent.

Should patients have existing dental amalgams removed?

There is no evidence to suggest that existing dental amalgam restorations are harmful to patient health. Therefore, there is no reason to replace clinically sound dental amalgam restorations.

The removal of sound dental amalgam restorations can result in unnecessary loss of tooth material, with additional accompanied risks such as; tooth fracture and pulpitis.

Some patients might raise concerns that the restrictions on its use suggest that the safety of dental amalgam is in question. However, the measures being taken to cease the use of dental amalgam in dentistry are based entirely on environmental concerns and there is no evidence-based reason to restrict use on patients on health grounds.

What measures do all healthcare practices and practitioners need to have in place to minimize release of dental amalgam into the environment when removing dental amalgam restorations from patients?

Dental practitioners should exercise responsibility in the safe management of waste dental amalgam, beginning with the use of an amalgam separating device that can reduce the amount of amalgam-contaminated water released from dental clinics⁴. All dental amalgam waste should then be handled and collected by an authorized waste management establishment. The practice of dental amalgam waste control is a legal requirement in Qatar and has been communicated with all dental and oral health providers through the office of Accreditation and Facility Licensing in Qatar.

⁴ Chin, G., Chong, J., Kluczevska, A., Lau, A., Gorjy, S. and Tennant, M., 2000. The environmental effects of dental amalgam. Australian Dental Journal, 45(4), pp.246-249.