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# Problems with Amalgams

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Thanks to the development of new, stronger tooth-colored restorative materials, silver amalgam fillings are often not the best choice for long-term dental health, functionality, and appearance.

## What is silver amalgam?

Silver amalgam is composed of 35 percent silver, 15 percent tin or tin mixed with copper, a trace of zinc, and 50 percent mercury.

Amalgam has been used as a restorative material for decades, and several health organizations say that the mercury is safe when it's bound with other metals, as in the case of dental amalgam. However, a number of dentists and other health professionals have expressed concern over the safety of silver amalgam because mercury is a highly toxic heavy metal.



*Worn silver fillings*



*Fractures can occur*



*Natural-looking results*

## The problems with silver amalgam fillings

Silver fillings are less attractive than tooth-colored composite resin fillings; for this reason, they're typically not placed in teeth located near the front of your mouth.

The amalgam fillings expand and contract with heat and cold. This can eventually cause the filling to fracture your tooth, so a crown may be required to restore its functionality.

Silver fillings will eventually corrode and leak. This can allow bacteria to get in under the amalgam and cause new decay to develop.

They can fracture as they age, which also breaks the protective seal and leads to decay.

The amalgam can cause unsightly dark gray stains on teeth and gums.

New tooth-colored materials, such as composite resins and porcelain, allow us to avoid all of these problems and produce durable, natural-looking results.