



## CDA Position on the Replacement of Serviceable Amalgam Fillings

### **Preamble**

A dentist has the responsibility to ensure that treatments recommended and/or performed reflect the standard of the profession — and that those treatments would bear the close scrutiny of peers. As a profession, Dentistry has the responsibility to ensure that its standards are based on a systematic analysis of current scientific evidence, as opposed to selected individual studies.

The decision to recommend any treatment should be determined subsequent to a comprehensive oral examination that meets the health needs of a patient, and within the bounds of the clinical circumstances with which the patient presents.

Dentists have an obligation to use approved devices and material in the best interests of patients. Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada is responsible for the safety of medical devices and materials, including amalgam.

Current scientific consensus supports the position that amalgam does not contribute to illness. There are no data to suggest that the removal of amalgam restorations should be performed in an attempt to treat patients with non-specific chronic complaints.

The question of treatment involving the replacement of serviceable amalgam restorations must be clearly and thoroughly discussed with the patient prior to the delivery of those services.

Patients who request replacement must be provided with sufficient information to understand the implications of their decision. When a health need, confirmed by medical advice indicates, or at the request of the patient following discussions of the implications, amalgam restorations may be replaced with a clinically acceptable material following a treatment schedule which is in the best interest of the patient's health.

### **Position**

Serviceable amalgam restorations should not be removed unless:

- a) the patient has a real, as distinct from a perceived health need, or
- b) the patient requests removal of serviceable amalgam restorations, and the dentist is assured that the patient has been provided with sufficient information to allow compliance with the patient's request.

*Approved  
CDA Board of Directors  
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