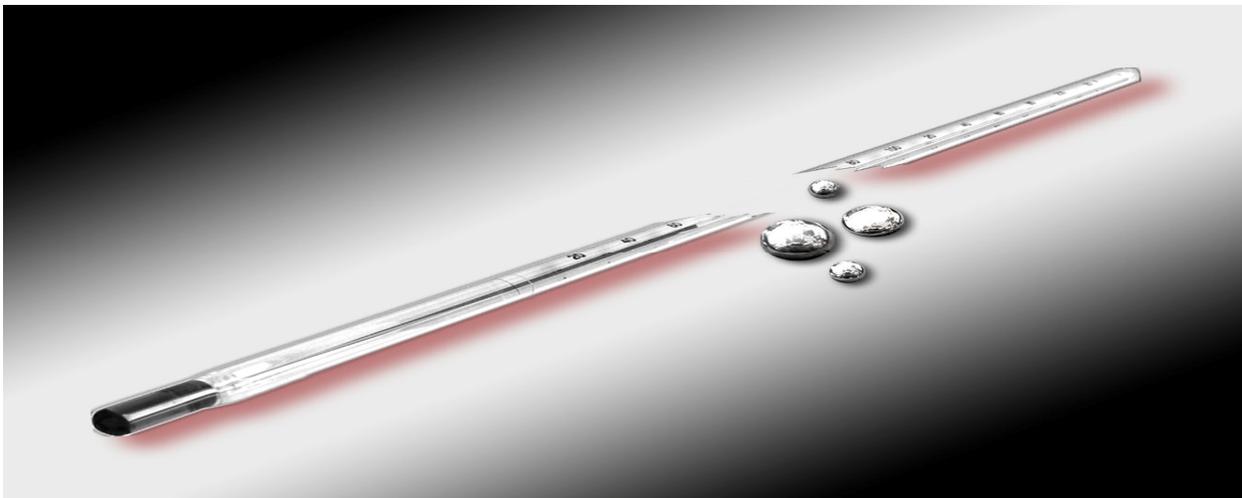


Mercury use in Lebanon

1- In Hospitals

Around 84 % of the surveyed hospitals are still using mercury containing products, mainly mercury containing thermometers and sphygmomanometers. Other mercury containing products generally used include items listed in table below.

Product type used	Percentage of hospitals
Dental amalgam	5%
Gastrointestinal tubes (Cantor tubes, esophageal dilators, Miller-Abbott tubes)	35%
Phenyl mercuric acetate preservative	8%
Mercury-containing stains	25%
Thermostat probes	27%
Barometers	18%
Fluorescent tubes	55%
Others	12.5%



Spilled mercury is considered a serious health risk due to the physical characteristics of the metal and its toxic properties.

Although the majority of hospitals are aware of the health risks associated with the use of mercury and have mercury spill clean-up and disposal policies and procedures, only 17% are ready to become mercury-free without financial assistance, while 67% showed interest in phasing out mercury in the presence of financial assistance.



Mercury in dental amalgam

Dental amalgam is a tooth filling material that is approximately 50% mercury, a highly polluting neurotoxin. Amalgam is recognized as a source of mercury pollution and can have significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.

Dental amalgam enters the environment via many different pathways:

- Air via sewage sludge and waste incineration, and dental clinic emissions.
- Water via human waste disposal and dental clinic releases,
- Land via landfills, human burials, and fertilizers.

After amalgam enters the environment, certain microorganisms can change its elemental mercury into methylmercury, a highly toxic form of mercury that builds up in fish, shellfish, and people that eat fish. Methylmercury can damage children's development brains and nervous systems even before they are born.

Minamata Convention

The Minamata Convention on mercury requires each party to “phase down the use of dental amalgam.”

Mercury free dental restoration, such as composites and glass ionomers, offer many advantages:

- Environment-friendly, no evidence of environmental toxicity.
- Preserve teeth, allow for less tooth destruction, and a longer survival of tooth itself.
- Prevent caries, glass ionomers have properties that are known to help prevent tooth decay.
- More accessible,
- User-friendly.