International mercury treaty signed
Minamata Convention bans products, Agrees to amalgam phase-down

DT Asia Pacific:

MINAMATA, Japan: Certain products containing mercury will be banned from 2020, according to a new international treaty signed by governments in Minamata in Japan last week. The regulations apply to the production and trade of batteries, cosmetics and fluorescent lamps containing the toxic material, among other products. Amalgam dental fillings are not affected by the ban.

However, the treaty agreed on a number of provisions on the phasing down of the controversial dental material. The Convention, which was proceeded by five intergovernmental negotiation rounds and set in place for adoption at a meeting in Geneva in January, was signed by 87 countries.

Governments now have three years to develop and implement national strategies to reduce or eliminate the production and industrial use of the toxic metal. Mercury emission from large-scale industrial plants, the main source of mercury pollution worldwide, will also be controlled.

Dental associations reacted positively to the decision, which will permit the use of amalgam as a restorative dental material for the years to come. Dr Stuart Johnston from the British Dental Association, who took part in the negotiations on behalf of the FDI World Dental Federation, commented: “We are delighted that the Minamata Convention allows the dental profession continued access to a key restorative material. Dental amalgam is safe and effective: it has been in use for over 150 years and no studies demonstrate any harm to human health.”

He said that despite amalgam not being banned by the treaty, dental associations will continue to work to maintain access to the material. Den sificant advances have been made in recent years in reducing the amount of mercury in restorative dental materials and this will continue.

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Mouthwash made from neem bark

The International Association for Dental Research (IADR) has recognised a dental student from Myanmar for his research on the clinical effectiveness of mouthwash made from the bark of the neem tree, which is used in traditional South-East Asian medicine.

The study involved 18 male and 25 female adults with dental hygiene. Forty-two participants (97.7 per cent) reported significantly reduced tooth sensitivity after eight weeks. Comparative dental examinations at baseline, and after four weeks and eight weeks of product use found that there were no adverse effects on the oral soft and hard tissue.

Regeneration with diamonds

New research suggests that nanodiamonds could be used to promote bone growth as they bind rapidly to both bone and soft tissue. According to the US scientists, the by-product of conventional mining and refining operations can be inserted non-invasively through injection or an oral rinse.

Desensitising confirmed

A study conducted by dental researchers in Taiwan has provided new evidence that toothpaste containing the amino acid arginine and calcium carbonate can contribute to a significant reduction in dentine hypersensitivity after having used the toothpaste for eight weeks.

The study involved 18 male and 25 female adults with dentine hypersensitivity and caries-free teeth. In order to evaluate the clinical efficacy of desensitising toothpaste, which is considered the most cost-effective and easiest treatment for most patients, the participants were asked to brush their teeth twice a day with Colgate-Sensitive Pro-Relief toothpaste, containing 8 per cent arginine and calcium carbonate, for eight weeks. Comparative dental examinations at baseline, and after four weeks and eight weeks of product use found that there were no adverse effects on the oral soft and hard tissue. Forty-two participants (97.7 per cent) reported significantly reduced hypersensitivity.

Mouthwash

Mouthwash is a rinse product that can be used to clean the mouth. It can be used before or after brushing and can be used to freshen breath, remove food debris, and kill bacteria in the mouth. Mouthwash can also be used to treat oral health conditions such as gum disease and bad breath.

GC opens new headquarters

GC International has recently opened its new head office in Lucerne in Switzerland. The newly established international branch of dental products manufacturer GC will be guiding the international affairs of GC Asia, GC Europe and GC America in the future. GC Corporation will continue to operate independently from Japan.

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