

CALIFORNIA DENTAL ASSOCIATION®

HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA DENTAL MATERIALS FACT SHEET

The Dental Materials Fact Sheet (DMFS) is required by law (Chapter 801, 1992 Statutes). This law requires:

“...the Board of Dental Examiners of California to develop, distribute, and update as necessary, a fact sheet describing and comparing the risks and efficacy of the various types of dental restorative materials that may be used to repair a dental patient’s oral condition or defect...” This law required that the fact sheet be provided to all licensed dentists to assist them in discussing the various restorative materials with their patients.

A fact sheet was published by the Dental Board in 1993 and sent to all licensed dentists.

In 1999, the Joint Legislative Sunset Review Committee reviewed the Dental Board’s activities and performance and informed the board that the fact sheet should be updated to reflect the current science of restorative materials.

An updated fact sheet was published by the Dental Board in November 2001 following a period of 18 months during which the fact sheet was prepared by an independent consultant and reviewed during many Dental Board public hearings held throughout the state.

In addition, legislation passed in 2001 (Chapter 532), taking effect January 1, 2002, amended the original law, and now requires that the DMFS:

“...shall be provided by a dentist to every new patient and to patients of record prior to the performance of dental restoration work.”

Receipt must be acknowledged in writing by the patient, generally kept in the patient’s record.

Whenever the fact sheet is updated, it must be distributed in the manner described above.

Once this requirement became law, the Dental Board began production of a “consumer-friendly” version of the DMFS, simplifying the language to meet the recommended reading level standard (eighth grade reading level) used by the Department of Consumer Affairs for information distributed to the public.

In 2002, the Dental Board established a subcommittee to develop a consumer-friendly fact sheet, and that process concluded in May 2004. The consumer-friendly version was approved by the Dental Board on May 14, and that version is available on-line at www.dbc.ca.gov. Dentists will need to begin using this version as soon as they formally receive their copy from the Dental Board (estimated June 2004).



At the national level, the science surrounding dental amalgam continues to be assessed. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration established the "Working Group on Dental Amalgam" in the early 1990s and has in both 1993 and 1997 reported that they have reviewed the contemporary research literature on dental amalgam and found no reason to ban dental amalgam or to restrict its use in any subpopulation. In 2003, the FDA sponsored, along with the National Institutes of Health and the National Institutes of Dental and Craniofacial Research, and convened another panel of experts to review the scientific literature published since 1997 to again assess the safety and use of dental amalgam. This task force will be publishing a report of their findings later in 2004.
