

# REDUCING EXPOSURE TO COMMON TOXIC ELEMENTS

## 1 ALUMINUM

Avoid all aluminum cookware and food storage items, commercial baked goods, baking powder, anti-perspirants (even the natural crystal kind, which are aluminum salts), bentonite clay and commercial table salt. A common food source that contains aluminum is black tea, even organic; drinking it with lemon increases absorption further. Some water filters increase aluminum in water.

Oven-safe glass bakeware is a good alternative to aluminum bakeware. Most natural food stores sell food-storage items made without aluminum. Be cautious with antacids, which often contain aluminum.

Most vaccines contain aluminum as an adjuvant (to help stimulate the immune system to respond). Ask about spreading out any medically recommended vaccines over time to keep the aluminum levels at each vaccine as low as possible. The larger the exposure, the more difficult it is for the body to detoxify.

## 2 ANTIMONY

Avoid furniture and mattresses that have been treated with flame retardant chemicals. In some states, you may need a doctor's prescription to obtain these. In California, recent legislation allows any consumer to purchase furniture and bedding free of flame retardants (which may be based on antimony or on bromine, which is a potent endocrine disruptor and thyroid disruptor). Antimony is often used as a fire retardant on cotton clothing, especially sleepwear, and bedding. Laundering all cotton clothing and bedding (with or without other types of materials) in washing soda 5 times before using it will take care of this. Rinse well before use.

(see <http://www.pennilessparenting.com/2011/01/homemade-washing-soda.html>).

Buying organic sleepwear and bedding, or with labels warning that they are not flame resistant, will get you around the problem.

## 3 ARSENIC

Go easy on rice and avoid non-organic chicken, and stay away from treated wood and construction sites.

## 4 MERCURY

Safely remove any CFLs and replace with incandescent bulbs. When changing bulbs, I recommend enclosing them in safe disposal bags provided by your local solid waste department, and safely disposing of them as soon as practically possible.

If you choose to be vaccinated, ask your doctor for thimerosal-free vaccines.

# REDUCING EXPOSURE TO COMMON TOXIC ELEMENTS

If you ever need a filling, ask for a composite filling (the white kind) and strictly avoid any fillings that contain mercury, no matter how much your dentist reassures you of its safety and practicality.

The soil and waters in the Gold Country and other former gold-mining areas are rather high in mercury, and fish from these areas are considered contaminated.

Limit fish consumption to 1-2 servings per week or less of low-mercury fish, such as wild-caught salmon and sardines. Avoid high-mercury fish such as tuna, swordfish and other large fish.

## 5 LEAD

Avoid do-it-yourself fix-it projects, which often stir up lead in paint. Test your soil prior to gardening. Some soils are naturally high in lead, in which case it's best to garden in pots or construct a raised bed using organic soil certified low in lead. Safely and quickly dispose of old batteries, which can leach lead salts. Because excess vitamin D, especially in people consuming low-calcium diets, can encourage the absorption of lead, avoid excess intake of vitamin D and get your vitamin D levels checked regularly if you're supplementing with it. Be especially careful about avoiding excess vitamin D in small children, who absorb much more lead proportionally than adults.

## 6 SILVER

Common exposure sources include amalgam fillings, silver jewelry and colloidal silver products.

## 7 TITANIUM

If you have titanium implants, this is to be expected and is unlikely to be causing problems unless you're allergic. Otherwise, check your sunscreen. Titanium dioxide from sunscreen is not usually absorbed through the skin, but if you are absorbing it, it's best to change sunscreens.

## 8 BARIUM

Some medical and imaging procedures (such as an upper GI X-ray study and barium enemas) use this substance. If you test high for barium but are not aware of the exposure source, you may want to test your water and/or purchase a filter that removes barium, if you cannot identify the source. Some water sources are high in barium.

## 9 BISMUTH

The two most common sources are make-up, including mineral make-up, and some antacids (Pepto Bismol® takes its name from bismuth). Some H. Pylori remedies also contain bismuth.