

Mercury Free Pediatric Dentistry in Nepal

Senchhema Limbu¹

Editor-in-Chief

¹Professor, Departments of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry, Kantipur Dental College and Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Nepal is a small South Asian country of the world and in the field of dentistry it is growing with recent advances of dentistry being incorporated in their clinical practice according to its availability in the country.

In the year 2012 Nepal Dental Association (NDA) took an initiative to incorporate mercury free dentistry where Minamata Convention on Mercury was signed up on 10 October, 2013 wherein mercury use in dental materials would be stopped in children and pregnant mothers by 2020.¹ President Dr Sudin Shakya and General Secretary Dr. Senchhema Limbu (NDA, 2012-2014) undertook the initiation to conduct research on the mercury content in hair sample of dentists in Kathmandu Nepal during their tenure period.¹ Mr. Ram Charitra Thapa was involved in nationwide campaign thus Minamata convention was signed with the sole purpose of excluding mercury from dentistry too as mercury in amalgam was considered as a carcinogenic product.¹

Correspondence



Dr. Senchhema Limbu

Professor

Department of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry,
Kantipur Dental College and Teaching Hospital,
Kathmandu, Nepal.

E-mail: senche@hotmail.com

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The curriculum in universities were changed accordingly and thus by 2020 mercury free Pediatric dentistry in Nepal was attainable. Under the initiation Pediatric dentists of Nepal involved in universities came together namely Dr. Senchhema Limbu, Dr. Parajeta Dikshit, Dr. Bandana Koirala, Dr. Sunanda Sundas, Dr. Sumita Upadhyay, Dr. Sanskriti Khanal and Dr. Megha Pradhan to make mercury free curriculum as they believed that it needs to start from the root level. Thus, during curriculum development program mercury use was excluded from the preclinical works in Pediatric dentistry and it was replaced by glass ionomer cement and composite restoration. Kathmandu University and Tribhuvan University followed this new trend and thus the replacement of mercury could be achieved from the basic level in pediatric dentistry.

The Government of Nepal (MOHP- Ministry of Health and Population) made a decision of banning import, purchase and uses of mercury based equipment's in Nepal on March 4, 2013 and it was effective since July 17, 2013 in Nepal.¹ Thus, dental suppliers have been requested not to import or sell mercury incorporated materials. Dental Clinics and hospitals were encouraged to use alternative materials to minimize or totally eliminate the use of mercury i.e. amalgam from their clinical practice. Some clinics also used mercury free clinic logos in their clinics.

Pediatric dentists of Nepal mostly use glass ionomer cements/composite in their clinical practice thus

eliminating the use of amalgam in children. Phase down of amalgam use was started and by the year 2020 mercury free dentistry was attained in the Pediatric Dentistry of

Nepal and is practicing mercury free dentistry in children of Nepal till date.

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REFERENCES

1. Government of Nepal Ministry of Forests and Environment. Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) in Nepal. 2019 Jan;1-169. [\[FullText\]](#)