



Press Release
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SafeMinds Recommends Mercury-Free Flu Vaccines for Seniors. Mercury implicated in Alzheimer's Disease in a review of the scientific literature published today.

SafeMinds has developed a new campaign to educate the public about the continued use of a mercury preservative, known as thimerosal, in the majority of influenza vaccines, including those given annually to seniors. "We intend to empower the public to make informed decisions about flu vaccines. There is a tremendous amount of misinformation being circulated about mercury having been removed from vaccines," says Lyn Redwood, RN, MSN, Executive Director of SafeMinds. "While there are mercury-free flu shots available, consumers are often unaware that they need to ask for them and insist on not being exposed to mercury."

Supporting SafeMinds' position, a newly published review of 88 studies in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease suggests that individuals should avoid inorganic mercury exposures based on consistent findings in both animal studies and cell culture that mirror the pathology of Alzheimer's Disease. "In 32 of the 40 studies we reviewed testing memory in individuals exposed to inorganic mercury, there were significant memory deficits," comments one of the co-authors, Richard Deth, PhD of Northeastern University, in a phone interview. "Until further studies are complete, the precautionary principle should apply to all mercury exposures."

The new SafeMinds "Don't Take the Risk" tool kit includes a three-minute informational video, a 30 second video for use as a public service announcement, and free 2010-2011 flu vaccine brochures for download or by mail. Both the brochures and the website include listings of which flu vaccines are mercury-free. The website has links to the package inserts, the CDC's Vaccine Information Sheets, related research, and background information on mercury and thimerosal. **All resources are available free of charge at www.safemindsflu.org.**

"A study done in primates showed that ethyl mercury, from thimerosal, produced more inorganic mercury in the brain compared to an equal amount of methyl mercury, which is what you get from fish," states Katie Weisman, SafeMinds' Director of Communications and Public Policy. "Since mercury has an estimated half-life of decades in the brain, we recommend that seniors ask for their flu vaccines without mercury. While this is just one source of mercury exposure, it is a very easy one to avoid if you have the information you need."

The Coalition for SafeMinds is a 501C-3 organization dedicated to restoring health and protecting future generations by eradicating the devastation of neurological disorders induced by mercury and other man-made toxicants.