

A Modern-day Mad Hatter

Dale Dunn, DC, LAc, and Timothy Fior, MD, DHt

Abstract: Mercury is ubiquitous in our environment. This has produced a “disease of modernity” which is a result of the gradual bioaccumulation of mercury from dental amalgams, vaccines and other medicines, cosmetics, foods, industrial and natural sources. Chronic mercury exposure can produce significant multi-system morbidity in susceptible humans, though diagnosis of chronic mercury intoxication remains controversial. This case depicts that of a “modern-day mad hatter” who, despite the use of well-indicated homeopathic medicines and careful attention to homeopathic case management, failed to progress to cure. The eventual diagnosis of chronic mercury toxicity and subsequent oral chelation therapy helped to significantly improve some chronic neurologic symptoms which were only temporarily palliated by a series of well chosen homeopathic remedies. Homeopaths are reminded that any/all exciting and maintaining cause(s) of disease are impediments that must be accurately ascertained and removed before homeopathic cure is possible.

Key words: Mercury, Mercury toxicity, Impediment to cure, Causa occasionalis

Published in AJHM Spring 2014.

Introduction and Background

Mercury poisoning is not a new phenomenon with reports dating back to ancient China implying that the first emperor, Qin Shi Huangdi, 259 BC-210 BC, was inadvertently poisoned by his physicians using mercury compounds, ironically in order to provide him immortality. (1) Today, chronic mercury toxicity is more common than acute poisoning. Its effects can be dermal, neurologic, psychological, endocrine, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular or renal. Toxicity results from the gradual bioaccumulation of mercury via inhalation, ingestion, injection and/or absorption through the skin.

The term *mad hatter* first entered the common vernacular of 19th-century Europe as a result of observations and reports on the systemic effects of chronic mercury exposure in workers employed in the hat-making industry. For these workers, called “furriers”, “felters” and “hatters”, contact with dust or steam vapor containing the elemental or nitrate form of mercury was unavoidable, making them an ideal population for observations and case studies related to mercury morbidity and early discussions about employer liability. (2, 3)

In the U.S., throughout the 18th Century, though even then controversial, it was standard-of-care for large doses of calomel (mercurous-chloride, Hg_2Cl_2) to be employed by physicians. Once patients salivated (a sign of mercury poisoning) they were considered to have had a “curative” dose of mercury. The prominent physician Benjamin Rush championed mercury as the “Samson of medicine,” in his defense of its use during Philadelphia's yellow fever epidemic of 1793-94, to which critic William Cobbett replied, "Dr. Rush, in the emphatic style peculiar to himself, calls mercury the Samson of medicine. In his hands and those of his partisans it may indeed be justly compared to Samson: for I verily believe they have slain more Americans with it than ever Samson slew of the Philistines..." (4) Williston, in the late 19th century, reported the impact of mercury pollution from industrial waste on communities around Connecticut (5) and Wilson, in his 1940 textbook on neurology, attributed impairments such as inattention, irritable-excitement, hallucinations and rapid, oscillatory tremors (hatter's shakes) to mercury poisoning. (6) In 1946, Buckell describes “erethrism” (insomnia, extreme shyness and withdrawal, memory loss, emotional instability, irritability at trifles, depression, anorexia, vasomotor disturbance, uncontrolled perspiration, and blushing) as the first symptom-complex to develop. (7) Worldwide, during the first half of the 20th century, “Pink Disease” (acrodynia) was a common infant morbidity and sometimes mortality caused by calomel-laced teething powders. Affected babies presented with erythema of the palms and soles, edema of the hands and feet, desquamating rash, hair loss, pruritus, diaphoresis, tachycardia, hypertension, photophobia, severe irritability, anorexia, insomnia, poor muscle tone, and constipation or diarrhea. (8-11) In 1961, researchers correlated elevated urinary mercury levels with the mysterious symptoms of tremors, sensory loss, ataxia, and visual field constriction that occurred in a population of fishermen and their families in coastal villages surrounding Minamata Bay. (12)

Today, signs and symptoms of chronic mercury toxicity develop insidiously, are nonspecific and varied. The toxic person may experience anorexia, weight loss, fatigue, and muscular weakness, (13) all of which may indicate a number of diseases. As a result, mercury toxicity is under-appreciated as a potential source of chronic morbidity in humans. Today's mad hatter syndrome, mercury toxicity (14), has been linked to "constellation syndromes" constituting immune, mental-emotional, cardiovascular, visual-aural, neurological, fertility, musculoskeletal and

endocrine disorders. (15-21) Atopic dermatitis has been described (22) and links between mercury toxicity, Alzheimer's (23), autism (24), and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (25) have been suggested.

Mechanisms of Mercury Poisoning

Mercury in all forms can poison and according to some, it does so in amounts significantly less than previously believed. (26) Damage is ascribed to mercury's ability to induce oxidative stress (27) and its affinity for the body's ubiquitous sulfhydryl (thiol), seleno-hydryl, phosphoryl, carboxyl, amide and amine groups that are intimately involved with enzymatic processes. (28) Oxidative damage interferes with mitochondrial DNA replication (clastogenesis) and the proteins required for membrane stability, transport and cell structure. Consequently, mercury has the potential to disrupt and/or destroy the structure and/or function of any organ or sub-cellular mechanism by depletion of glutathione and protein-bound sulfhydryl groups, resulting in the production of reactive oxygen species such as superoxide ions, hydrogen peroxides, and hydroxyl radicals. As a consequence, enhanced lipid peroxidation, DNA damage, altered calcium and sulfhydryl homeostasis occurs. (29) The vapor from amalgam fillings contains elemental mercury (Hg_0) which is lipid soluble, allowing ready entry into the blood, then across diffusion barriers such as the blood brain barrier. Once past the blood brain barrier, mercury is readily oxidized into mercurous (Hg^+) and mercuric (Hg^{++}) ions. Due to their charges, these ions cannot easily recross the blood brain barrier, resulting in brain and CNS bioaccumulation. (30) Methyl-mercury, primarily from fish, forms the compound methyl-mercuric-L-cysteine, a molecular mimicker of methionine. In this form, methyl-mercury may penetrate the blood-brain, pulmonary and gastro-intestinal barriers unopposed, using its affinity for the L-type amino acid (cysteine) transport system. Brain levels of mercury are not directly measurable except at autopsy. Sugita (1978) has presented autopsy evidence that brain-mercury concentrations increase with age, and has derived, via regression analysis, a biological halftime of 18 years (6570 days) in the brain. (31) Some working in this field suggest that the actual halftime of mercury in the brain/CNS may be even longer, leading to essentially continuous accumulation throughout life. (32) As there is no innate mechanism in the body to remove this mercury from the brain, it is doubtful that homeopathic remedies could be of assistance. The same author asserts that only prolonged, gradual, low dose oral chelation with a lipid soluble dithiol chelator for mercury like alpha lipoic acid (ALA) can gradually remove this mercury from the brain based on observed symptomatic clinical improvements in neurologic symptoms using ALA this way. (38)

Diagnostic Markers for Mercury Toxicity

Whole Blood/Serum mercury levels reveal recent exposures, reflecting primarily dietary influences (methyl-mercury). Once ingested, methyl-mercury is rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream where it resides only briefly before being distributed throughout the body, typically shunted into fatty tissues. Therefore, blood testing is rarely useful in patients with symptoms implying chronic mercury intoxication, especially from amalgam fillings.

Urine analysis of total mercury typically reflects combined sources of inorganic mercury, either de-methylated from foods or elemental from dental amalgams. However, total-load from urine cannot determine tissue retention such as in the brain or the kidneys. As a result, the potential for underestimating the amounts of mercury retained in the tissues is significant.

Urine porphyrins, as more precise markers, can identify chronic mercury toxicity as mercury down-regulates two critical enzymes, uroporphyrinogen decarboxylase (UROD) and coproporphyrinogen oxidase (CPOX), both involved with synthesis of heme. This down-regulation, (Figure 1) particularly in the renal cortex, results in the accumulation of 5-carboxyporphyrin (5cxP), precoproporphyrin and coproporphyrin in the urine; interpreted as an elevated body-burden of mercury. (33) Although highly specific for chronic mercury poisoning, urine porphyrins have a low sensitivity as they are easily destroyed by heat, or motion, thus the risk of false negatives is high.

Chelator-challenge utilizes DMSA or DMPS. (34, 35) Following an oral dose, an 8-24 hour urine collection is examined for heavy metals. However, there are drawbacks:

1. The large amount of chelator required may provoke mercury redistribution symptoms if the patient is already metal-burdened. Adverse drug reactions to the chelator are possible and it is unclear what effect chelators and adjuvants may have on a patient's existent symptoms. For example, the side-effects of DMSA include GI disorders, skin rashes and flu-like symptoms and according to some researchers, the simultaneous administration of adjuvants such as N-Acetyl-Cysteine (NAC), glutathione (GSH) or selenium may actually harm the patient. Mild to moderate neutropenia has been reported in some patients and regular complete blood counts are recommended during therapy. (36) In addition, renal and hepatic function should be checked before starting treatment. (37) Anecdotal reports of chelator in saliva, having the potential to dissolve existing amalgam surfaces, has led some clinicians to the conclusion that any amalgam in a patient's mouth, even under crowns is a staunch contraindication for chelator-challenge testing and/or chelation therapy until any/all oral mercury is removed. (38, 39)

2. Challenge testing is non-specific and if heavy metals show up in the urine, which ones and in what order they appear is unpredictable. For example, early on, the patient in this case report orally loaded 100mg of DMSA as a urine-chelator, followed by an 8-hour urine collection. The results demonstrated elevated urine levels of lead, but no detectable levels of mercury, despite the high index of suspicion for chronic mercury toxicity.

3. Some recommend both pre- and post-challenge urine collections that are examined and compared in order to determine both current exposure (pre-) and total body burden (post-). (40, 41)

Hair Element Analysis (HEA) can be helpful, primarily by demonstrating chronic intoxication. HEA represents accumulated/distributed methylmercury (MeHg); usually >80% (42, 43) and MeHg is taken up by both hair follicles and brain cells and stored as MeHg-cysteine complexes. As a result, epidemiological studies often use total mercury concentrations in hair as biomarkers for MeHg exposure from fish consumption. Total mercury concentration in hair however, does not reflect exposure from inorganic mercury, as for example from the mercury vapor of amalgam fillings. (42) This is true in the case that follows, which despite a high index of suspicion of chronic intoxication from inorganic mercury from amalgam fillings, the hair mercury levels are low. This occurs because mercury causes derangement of mineral transport, which impairs the ability to excrete heavy metals. Mercury is the only heavy metal known to cause deranged mineral transport. Cutler has developed five statistical counting rules for the essential elements in hair analysis. If any one of the five counting-rules is positive, then deranged mineral transport is present, and chronic mercury intoxication is inferred. When deranged mineral transport is present, the toxic element analysis becomes unreliable until effective chelation therapy has concluded. (38, 44)

This case report illustrates chronic mercury intoxication as an impediment to homeopathic cure. Despite careful prescribing by an expert homeopath, a series of well-indicated homeopathic medicines merely palliated some chronic neurologic symptoms.

Case

A 45 y.o. male presents for homeopathic consultation with the following complaints:

Chronic constipation, since amalgam fillings were placed in childhood.

Brain fog. (Brain fog is a distinctive cognitive symptom which is highly characteristic of chronic mercury intoxication. It consists of being unable to think clearly without great effort. (38))

Timidity and intermittent irritability which began soon after amalgam placement.

Psoriasis on both elbows.

Arthritic pains in various joints.

Chilliness, especially cold hands and feet, worse at rest.

Offensive perspiration in the axillae.

White spots on most fingernails.

Chronic facial acne.

Habitually picks his nose.

Intermittent depression.

Recurrent sore throat pains.

Recurrent bronchitis.

The patient's mood, energy and arthritis pain are improved in the sun and while exercising (running).

Energy declines at 3pm.

Initial Case Analysis

A repertorization of the initial case shown below, with the more characteristic symptoms at the top, reveals Sepia to be a well indicated remedy.

	Sep.	Sil.	Sulph.	Calc.	Nit-ac.	Phos.	Nat-m.	Lyc.	Thuj.	Nux-v.	Con.	Ars.	Bell.	Zinc.	Hep.	Lach.	Petr.	Aur.
Total Rubrics	38	27	23	23	23	22	21	21	18	18	17	17	17	16	16	16	16	16
Kingdoms	14	12	12	11	10	11	10	9	11	8	10	9	9	9	8	8	8	7
GENERALITIES; EXERTION, physical; amel. (66)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
GENERALITIES; EXERTION, physical; amel.; vigorous (1)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
GENERALITIES; SUN, from; exposure to; amel. (22)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
GENERALITIES; AFTERNOON, one pm. – six pm.; agg.; three pm. (40)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
EXTREMITIES; COLDNESS; Hands; alternating with; cold feet (3)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
EXTREMITIES; COLDNESS; Foot; sitting, while; agg. (4)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
EXTREMITIES; COLDNESS; Hands (241)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
EXTREMITIES; COLDNESS; Foot (273)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CHEST; PERSPIRATION; axilla; offensive (35)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
MIND; TIMIDITY (157)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
EXTREMITIES; NAILS; complaints of; spotted (13)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
RECTUM; CONSTIPATION; children, in (55)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
RECTUM; CONSTIPATION; chronic (22)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
MIND; PROSTRATION of mind, mental exhaustion, brain fog (269)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
FACE; ERUPTIONS; acne (161)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
NOSE; PICKING nose (39)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
NOSE; BORING in, with fingers; inclination to bore (40)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Course of Care

Initially, the patient improved with *Sepia* 200D (Dunham preparation), slowly increasing to MM + 3H over the course of several years. Many other homeopathic medicines such as *Sulphur* taken to MMM, *Phosphorus* up to CM and *Silica* to MM were successfully prescribed as acute and/or chronic signs/symptoms became manifest. These and other homeopathic medicines served to improve the patient's mood and energy. Unfortunately, the patient would relapse into severe brain fog, intermittent irritability, depression and despair on a regular basis. Subsequently, due to lack of more permanent changes with homeopathic treatment, the patient elected to undergo a dental amalgam removal-replacement process. During the course of approximately 1.5 years, seven amalgams each containing approximately 50% mercury were removed and replaced with composite fillings. (Some patients feel better after amalgam removal as noted by Hal Huggins, D.D.S. and others. However, some may be worse, which is likely those who are genetically predisposed to having a difficult time excreting mercury.)

During and after the amalgam-removal-replacement process, the patient developed new symptoms that included wandering-intermittent, then constant fasciculation of both calf muscles, worse after exertion. His brain fog, irritability and depression worsened despite the use of well-indicated homeopathic medicines and the amalgam removal-replacement process. A DDI (Doctor's Data Incorporated, St. Charles, IL) Hair Element Analysis was performed (Table 1) and interpreted. (38, 44) Using Dr. Cutler's "5 Counting Rules" protocol, it was determined that the results met the Counting Rule #1 (the "all low" pattern where only five or less essential elements are to the right of the midline) indicating that deranged mineral transport was present. Since mercury is the only heavy metal which causes deranged mineral transport, this was evidence of chronic mercury intoxication. Furthermore, a symptom checklist indicated a 99.9% probability of chronic mercury intoxication.

Subsequently, the patient began low-dose oral chelation therapy according to Cutler's protocol, beginning with 6 mg. of ALA (Alpha-Lipoic Acid) every 3-4 hours for 3 days and 2 nights per week. The dose was titrated upward per the patient's tolerance, after which DMSA (Di-Mercapto-Succinic Acid) was added until doses of 50 mg. of DMSA and ALA were well-tolerated. Other supplements and antioxidants were taken at intervals to deal with symptoms of chelation therapy and the detoxification process.

During the course of approximately two years, the patient's brain fog and calf fasciculations significantly decreased and his energy and sense of well-being increased. (Although homeopathic remedies had palliated the brain fog and calf fasciculations, chelation produced a more permanent and marked improvement in these symptoms. This

correlates with the hypothesis that since there is no natural mechanism to remove mercury from the brain/CNS, homeopathy cannot enhance this process. Thus chelation with a lipid soluble chelator like ALA may be one of the only known ways to remove this mercury from the brain as evidenced by its ability to improve these chronic neurologic symptoms.) The most remarkable mood change was the decrease of his marked restlessness and nervous irritability. He also became less withdrawn and shy. A follow-on DDI-Hair Element Analysis was performed approximately two years after the start of oral chelation therapy, and almost six years after the start of care, yielding the results shown in Table 2, interpreted as "normal" per Cutler's "5 counting rules" and coincident with the patient's clinical improvement. This result is consistent with paragraph 7a in the *Organon* where Hahnemann states that we should remove the *causa occasionalis* or inciting cause of the symptoms whenever possible. Throughout the chelation process, the patient continued to receive and be helped by well indicated homeopathic single remedies.

Mercury in Homeopathic Medicine

In 1796, Dr. Samuel Hahnemann introduced "the uninterrupted, primary action of (highly-dilute) mercury" in his "Essay on a New Principle for Ascertaining the Curative Power of Drugs."(45) By 1798, Dr. Hahnemann describes mercury as possessing homeopathic potential and finally, mercury appears as a fully-proven homeopathic medicine in Volume 1 (1810-11) of Hahnemann's *Materia Medica Pura*. (46) From the *Organon of Medicine*; Hahnemann's exhortation to remove the occasional (*causa occasionalis*), temporary or maintaining cause(s) whether internal or external is stated. In aphorism 7a he notes that any intelligent physician would ascertain that a patient who presents with episodes of syncope and emotional lability may be suffering from exposure to an exciting cause such as strong smelling flowers. A patient who presents with a chronic eye inflammation would have his eye examined for a foreign body and that flank or bladder pain requires the examination for and possible expulsion of a causative "calculus". Dr. Hahnemann also expounds upon his experience with and warnings about mercury poisoning caused by allopathic dosing in aphorism 41, 41a, 74 and 276b. In these aphorisms, Hahnemann deplores allopathic doses of mercury, describing them as creators of "monstrous, complex and dis-similar" disease states, whose only service is to "weaken the vital force" and "destroy the organism." (47)

For homeopathic physicians, the proving symptoms of *Mercurius solubilis or vivus* (46) highlight the protean manifestations of acute and/or chronic mercury poisoning. Ultra-dilutions of homeopathic mercury, as with gross intoxication, affect every system of the body. The clinical signs and symptoms of chronic mercury toxicity seem remarkably similar to the provings and therefore striking to the homeopathic physician, while vague and unrelated to the allopathic physician. Clinically, mercury-intoxicated patients will exhibit significant improvements, remissions and dramatic relapses despite the use of well-indicated homeopathic medicines, prescription medications or functional medicine protocols. The length and intensity of the relapses typically increase and the patient may become quite physically, mentally and emotionally disabled as did the patient in this case report. These are the patients who initially react positively to well-chosen homeopathic medicines as superficial manifestations of disease are resolved. Nevertheless, these patients typically require repetition of the same homeopathic medicines in ascending, descending and/or LM potencies more frequently, simply to remain in a precipitously-stable state, while the deeper-lying disease (miasmatic according to some) remains refractory to care. Eventually, regardless of posology, stability is lost and frequent, prolonged relapses occur. Other patients with seemingly-similar patterns may recover quickly, even permanently, but mercury-intoxicated patients demonstrate bi-phasic pathology, causing the homeopathic physician to reach the conclusion that something is being overlooked. Often, the entire case is re-taken and the homeopathic physician is confronted with the same well-indicated medicines. As mercury accumulates in the brain-CNS complex, neurologic and/or mental-emotional aberrations may begin to dominate. Proving symptoms include an insidious-onset of depression with a loss of motivation and lack of interest in one's surroundings and life; a type of existential boredom (ennui) along with anhedonia; increasing fears, anxiety/panic with heart palpitations and dyspnea. Feelings of hopelessness with a sense of impending doom spawn an inability to solve the smallest of problems. There may be a combination of extreme irritability with amplified timidity in social settings. The patient may engage in prolonged, agitated, loquacious and repetitive conversations followed by an abrupt withdrawal from society and/or family for long periods of time. The patient may become quite restless, emotionally labile and exhibit routinely-poor judgment. Uni-polar euphoria and/or manic-depressive behavior may

develop. Obsessive-compulsive behavior may be seen as neuro-intoxication progresses. Delusions and hallucinations are possible in severe cases.

Conclusion and Discussion

Mercury toxicity poses serious risks to human health, having become a significant, yet controversial clinical entity. Its ubiquity in the environment via agricultural, manufacturing, medical, dental and food sources creates a potentially-toxic "total-load" effect in susceptible individuals. Signs and symptoms are diverse, reflecting direct cellular and mitochondrial damage, enzymatic pathway disruption and/or indirect damage as a result of oxidative stress. Effects are primarily noted in the nervous, genitourinary, respiratory, dermal, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, psychological and aural-visual systems, with the most devastating effects seen in the nervous system. Toxic effects of mercury exposure have been catalogued throughout the centuries, primarily through documentation of acute poisonings. Chronic mercury exposure, owing to its often multi-system effects, vague signs and symptoms, has been less stringently studied and reported. As a result, suffering individuals may find themselves in a diagnostic and treatment void. In order to fill this void, unique diagnostic, testing, interpretive and treatment protocols have been developed.

The patient in this case report had been under expert homeopathic medical care, utilizing well-indicated homeopathic medicines with precise attention to posology and the peculiarities of the original case and subsequent follow-ups. Despite initial encouraging and significant improvements in the patient's condition while under homeopathic medical care, the patient experienced cyclic regressions and relapses, especially of more neurologically based symptoms of fasciculations and mood. Subsequently, the patient fell into a population of patients who feel bereft of diagnostic and therapeutic options. It is a frustrating case like this, the result of the complex layering of morbidity imposed by modernity that exhorts homeopathic physicians to recall and heed Hahnemann's experiences with "hygiene", "impediments to cure" and "causa occasionalis". Eventually, this case yielded to unique protocols developed to diagnose and treat mercury toxicity. Clinical improvement, consistent with the predictive outcome as outlined by the protocol, was obtained. As a result, this case study, rather than highlighting a homeopathic medical cure, serves instead as a strong reminder of Hahnemann's aphorisms. When confronted with modern-day mad hatters or other confounding, and complex cases that remain refractory to homeopathic best-practices, the physician must begin searching for accumulated and/or repetitive exposures to the myriad of obvious or occult chemical, physical, mental and emotional stressors unique to our modern times. Hahnemann reminds us that the case well-taken using classical protocol, prescribing well-indicated medicines while employing assiduous posology, does not necessarily end with a homeopathic medical cure if maintaining causes are ignored. Indeed, this case report demonstrates this principle. For this patient, the bioaccumulation of mercury due to chronic exposure plus a specific sensitivity to mercury proved to be the impediment to a lasting homeopathic medical cure. The removal of this underlying impediment and maintaining cause ultimately provided the patient with a continued significant improvement.

Table 1

The patient's post-amalgam removal Hair Element results. In the "essential and other" elements section, according to Cutler's "counting rules" protocol, only five elements extend to the right of the midline. Thus, Counting Rule #1 is positive, qualifying this patient as having deranged mineral transport. Since mercury is the only heavy metal which causes deranged mineral transport (pregnancy and lactation are other known causes), this results confirms chronic mercury toxicity. Interestingly, none of the potentially-toxic elements are elevated into the red (toxic) range. However, this is not unusual when there is deranged mineral transport, as the excretion of toxic elements including mercury are blocked by chronic mercury poisoning. Also, note that Ca⁺ and Mg⁺ are to the right of midline, Na⁺ and K⁺ are to the left and Lithium is low, all interpreted as characteristic of mercury toxicity. (44) During the intervening six years, the patient experienced improvements and regressions while using well-indicated homeopathic medicines. However, significant, stable and permanent wellness was never achieved with homeopathic medicines until the patient underwent oral frequent low-dose chelation therapy.

Note: These counting rules are unique and apply exclusively to the DDI (Doctor's Data Incorporated) Hair Element Analysis test used in this case report. Cutler describes how these rules may be adapted to results from other reference laboratories. (44)

HAIR ELEMENTS							
		LAB#: [REDACTED]	CLIENT#: [REDACTED]				
		PATIENT: [REDACTED]	DOCTOR: [REDACTED]				
		SEX: Male					
		AGE: 45					
POTENTIALLY TOXIC ELEMENTS							
TOXIC ELEMENTS	RESULT $\mu\text{g/g}$	REFERENCE RANGE	PERCENTILE				
			68 th	50 th		95 th	
Aluminum	6.2	< 7.0	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Antimony	0.024	< 0.066	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Arsenic	0.039	< 0.080	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Beryllium	< 0.01	< 0.020	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Bismuth	0.10	< 0.060	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Cadmium	0.024	< 0.15	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Lead	0.56	< 2.0	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Mercury	0.18	< 1.1	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Platinum	< 0.003	< 0.005	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Thallium	< 0.001	< 0.010	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Thorium	< 0.001	< 0.005	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Uranium	0.054	< 0.060	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Nickel	0.22	< 0.40	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Silver	0.04	< 0.12	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Vanadium	0.27	< 0.30	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Titanium	0.28	< 1.0	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	
Total Toxic Representation							
ESSENTIAL AND OTHER ELEMENTS							
ELEMENTS	RESULT $\mu\text{g/g}$	REFERENCE RANGE	PERCENTILE				
			2.5 th	16 th	50 th	84 th	97.5 th
Calcium	840	200- 750	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Magnesium	49	25- 75	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Sodium	31	12- 90	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Potassium	15	9- 40	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Copper	11	10- 28	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Zinc	160	130- 200	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Manganese	0.05	0.15- 0.65	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Chromium	0.33	0.20- 0.40	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Vanadium	0.042	0.018- 0.065	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Molybdenum	0.029	0.025- 0.064	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Boron	0.60	0.40- 3.0	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Iodine	0.23	0.25- 1.3	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Lithium	0.004	0.007- 0.023	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Phosphorus	161	160- 250	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Selenium	0.97	0.95- 1.7	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Strontium	1.5	0.30- 3.5	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Sulfur	43600	44500- 52000	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Barium	0.49	0.16- 1.6	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Cobalt	0.006	0.013- 0.035	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Iron	4.5	5.4- 13	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Germanium	0.032	0.045- 0.065	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Rubidium	0.014	0.011- 0.12	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
Zirconium	0.076	0.020- 0.44	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
SPECIMEN DATA				RATIOS			
COMMENTS:				ELEMENTS	RATIOS	EXPECTED RANGE	
Date Collected: 9/17/2004	Sample Size: 0.197 g			Cu/Mg	17.1	4- 30	
Date Received: 10/19/2004	Sample Type: Head			Cu/P	5.22	0.8- 8	
Date Completed: 10/22/2004	Hair Color:			Na/K	2.07	0.5- 10	
Methodology: ICP-MS	Treatment:			Zn/Cu	14.5	4- 20	
	Shampoo: Emerald Forest			Zn/Cd	> 999	> 800	
©DOCTOR'S DATA, INC. • ADDRESS: 3755 Illinois Avenue, St. Charles, IL 60174-2420 • CLIA ID NO: 14D0846470 • MEDICARE PROVIDER NO: 148453							

Table 2

The patient's DDI Hair Elements results, after approximately two years of chelation therapy and six years after those seen in Table 1. Now, the "essential and other" elements results do not meet any of Cutler's "counting rules" criteria, and the Ca+, Mg+, Na+, and K+ are all in the same direction and Lithium levels are balanced. The results are interpreted as "negative" for deranged mineral transport and mercury toxicity. As a result, the test is now considered "normal", coincident with the patient's clinical improvement.

HAIR ELEMENTS



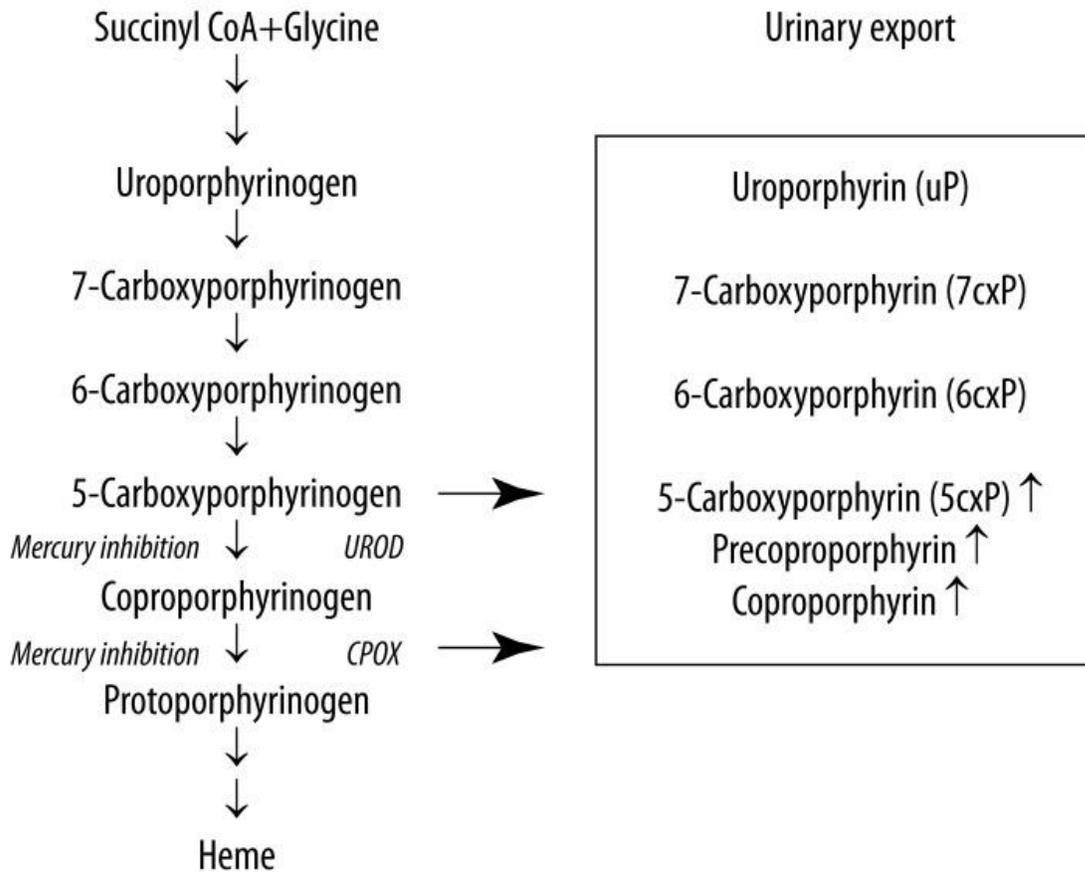
LAB#: [REDACTED]
 PATIENT: [REDACTED]
 ID: [REDACTED]
 SEX: Male
 AGE: 50

CLIENT#: [REDACTED]
 DOCTOR: [REDACTED]

POTENTIALLY TOXIC ELEMENTS							
TOXIC ELEMENTS	RESULT $\mu\text{g/g}$	REFERENCE RANGE	PERCENTILE				
			68 th			95 th	
Aluminum	5.8	< 7.0	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Antimony	0.013	< 0.066	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Arsenic	0.057	< 0.080	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Barium	0.42	< 1.0	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Beryllium	< 0.01	< 0.020	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Bismuth	0.095	< 2.0	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Cadmium	< 0.009	< 0.065	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Lead	0.33	< 0.80	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Mercury	0.05	< 0.80	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Platinum	< 0.003	< 0.005	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Thallium	< 0.001	< 0.002	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Thorium	< 0.001	< 0.002	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Uranium	0.042	< 0.060	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Nickel	0.18	< 0.20	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Silver	0.02	< 0.08	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Tin	0.14	< 0.30	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Titanium	0.46	< 0.60	[Bar chart showing result at 68th percentile]				
Total Toxic Representation							
ESSENTIAL AND OTHER ELEMENTS							
ELEMENTS	RESULT $\mu\text{g/g}$	REFERENCE RANGE	PERCENTILE				
			2.5 th	16 th	50 th	84 th	97.5 th
Calcium	532	200 - 750	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Magnesium	94	25 - 75	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Sodium	170	20 - 180	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Potassium	54	9 - 80	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Copper	17	11 - 30	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Zinc	170	130 - 200	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Manganese	0.07	0.08 - 0.50	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Chromium	0.51	0.40 - 0.70	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Vanadium	0.060	0.018 - 0.065	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Molybdenum	0.028	0.025 - 0.060	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Boron	0.56	0.40 - 3.0	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Iodine	1.9	0.25 - 1.8	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Lithium	0.020	0.007 - 0.020	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Phosphorus	161	150 - 220	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Selenium	1.6	0.70 - 1.2	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Strontium	1.7	0.30 - 3.5	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Sulfur	43200	44000 - 50000	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Cobalt	0.014	0.004 - 0.020	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Iron	13	7.0 - 16	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Germanium	0.030	0.030 - 0.040	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Rubidium	0.041	0.011 - 0.12	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
Zirconium	0.079	0.020 - 0.44	[Bar chart showing result between 16th and 84th percentiles]				
SPECIMEN DATA			RATIOS				
COMMENTS: Date Collected: 8/10/2010 Sample Size: 0.199 g Date Received: 8/14/2010 Sample Type: Head Date Completed: 8/16/2010 Hair Color: Brown Patient Reference: Treatment: Methodology: ICP-MS Shampoo: Burts Bees			ELEMENTS	RATIOS	EXPECTED RANGE		
			Ca/Mg	5.66	4 - 30		
			Ca/P	3.3	0.8 - 8		
			Na/K	3.15	0.5 - 10		
			Zn/Cu	10	4 - 20		
Zn/Cd	> 999	> 800					

DOCTOR'S DATA, INC. • ADDRESS: 3755 Illinois Avenue, St. Charles, IL 60174-2420 • CLIA ID NO: 14D0064670 • MEDICARE PROVIDER NO: 148453

Figure 1



Porphyrinogens appear in urine as porphyrin derivatives (right). Elevated mercury body-burden can result in increased urinary 5-carboxyporphyrin, porphyrin, precoporphyrin, and coproporphyrin by inhibiting uroporphyrinogen decarboxylase (UROD) and/or coproporphyrinogen oxidase (CPOX), urinary uroporphyrin is not reported to alter with inhibition of these enzymatic steps.

From: Med Sci Monit 2012; 18(7): CR425–CR431. Published online 2012 July 1. doi: 10.12659/MSM.883210
 This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-No-Derivs 3.0 Unported License.

References

1. Wright DC. The History of China. Westport (CT): Greenwood Publishing Group; 2001.
2. Taylor AS. Cases and Observations in Medical Jurisprudence; Chronic Poisoning by Mercury through the Skin and Lungs. Death after Four Years. In: Wilks S., editor. Guy's Hospital Reports. Third series, vol. 10. London: John Churchill and Sons; 1864: 173-79.
3. Porter C. Remarks on Felt Hat Making: Its Processes and Hygiene. Br J Med. 1902; February 15: 377-81.
4. Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. An Action for a Libel brought by Dr. Benjamin Rush against William Cobbett. Philadelphia, December 1799. In: Porcupine's Gazette. Philadelphia: 1800.
5. Williston SW. On the Manufacturing Processes and its Refuse, In: The Tenth Annual Report of the Connecticut State Board of Health; 1888.

6. Wilson SAK. Neurology. In: Dandy WE, Gaspar S, Wilson SAK, Et Al. The Landmark Library of Neurology and Neurosurgery. Omaha (NE): Gryphon Editions; 1994.
7. Buckell M. Chronic Mercury Poisoning. *Br J Ind Med* 1946; 3:55-63.
8. Barbacki M. Acrodynia in Poland after the 2d World War. *Przegl Lek.* 1970; 26(10):762-4.
9. Boyd AS, Seger D, Vannucci S, Langley M, Abraham JL, King LE Jr. Mercury exposure and cutaneous disease. *J Am Acad Dermatol* 2000 Jul; 43:81-90.
10. Kazantzis G. Mercury exposure and early effects: an overview. *Med Lav.* 2002 May-Jun; 93(3):139-47.
11. Tezer H, Kaya A, Kalkan G, Erkocoglu M, Ozturk K, Buyuktasli M. Mercury poisoning: a diagnostic challenge. *Pediatr Emerg Care* 2012 Nov; 28(11):1236-7.
12. Harada M. Minamata disease: methylmercury poisoning in Japan caused by environmental pollution. *Crit Rev Toxicol* 1995; 25(1):1-24.
13. Berlin M, Zalups RK, Fowler BA. Mercury. In: Nordberg G, Fowler BA, Nordberg M, Friberg LT, editors. *Handbook on the Toxicology of Metals*. 3rd ed. New York (NY): Elsevier; 2007. Chapter 33.
14. O'Carroll RE, Masterton G, Dougall N, Ebmeier KP, Goodwin GM. The neuropsychiatric sequelae of mercury poisoning: the Mad Hatter's disease revisited. *Br J Psychiatry* 1995 Jul; 167(1):95-8.
15. Wirth JJ, Mijal RS. Adverse effects of low level heavy metal exposure on male reproductive function. *Syst. Biol Reprod Med* 2010 Apr; 56(2):147-67.
16. Iavicoli I, Fontana L, Bergamaschi A. The effects of metals as endocrine disruptors. *J Toxicol Environ Health B Crit Rev* 2009 Mar; 12(3): 206-23.
17. Chen KL, Liu SH, Su CC, Yen CC, Yang CY. Mercuric compounds induce pancreatic islet dysfunction and apoptosis in vivo. *Int J Mol Sci* 2012 Sep 26; 13(10):12349-66.
18. Frustaci A, Magnavita N, Chimenti C. Marked elevation of myocardial trace elements in idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy compared with secondary cardiac dysfunction. *J Am Coll Cardiol* 1999;33(6):1578–1583.
19. Siblingud R. Evidence that mercury from dental amalgam may cause hearing loss in multiple sclerosis patients. *J Orthomol Med* 1997; 12(4):240-244.
20. Siblingud R. Psychometric evidence that dental amalgam mercury may be an etiological factor in manic depression. *J Orthomol Med* 1998; 13(1):31-40.
21. Silveira LCL, Damini ETB, Pinheiro MCN, Rodrigues AR, Moura ALA, Côrtes MIT, et al. Visual dysfunction following mercury exposure by breathing mercury vapour or by eating mercury-contaminated food. In: Mollon JD, Pokorny J, Knoblauch K, ed. *Normal and defective colour vision*, Oxford, England: Oxford University Press; 2003: 407-17.
22. Park H, Kim K. Association of blood mercury concentrations with atopic dermatitis in adults: A population-based study in Korea. *J Environ Res* 2011 May; 111(4):573-8.
23. Mutter J, Curth A, Naumann J, Deth R, Walach H. Does inorganic mercury play a role in Alzheimer's disease? A systematic review and an integrated molecular mechanism. *J Alzheimer's Dis* 2010; 22(2):357-74.
24. Nataf R, Skorupka C, Amet L, Lam A, Springbett A, Lathe R: Porphyrinuria in childhood autistic disorder: Implications for environmental toxicity. *Toxicol Appl Pharmacol* 2006; 214(2):99-108.
25. Praline J, Guennoc AM, Limousin N, Hallak H, de Toffol B, Corcia P. ALS and mercury intoxication: a relationship? *Clin Neurol Neurosurg.* 2007 Dec; 109(10):880-3.
26. Lucchini R, Cortesi I, Facco P, Benedetti L, Camerino D, Carta P, et al. Neurotoxic effect of exposure to low doses of mercury. *Med Lav* 2002 May-Jun; 93(3):202-14.
27. Yee S, Choi BH. Oxidative stress in neurotoxic effects of methyl-mercury poisoning. *NeuroTox.* 1996; 17(1): 17–26.
28. Carvalho CML, Hashemy, SI Lu J, Holmgren A. Inhibition of the human thioredoxin system: A molecular mechanism of mercury toxicity. *J Biol Chem* 2008; 283(18):11913–11923.
29. Stohs SJ, Bagchi D. Oxidative mechanisms in the toxicity of metal ions. *Free Radic. Biol Med* 1995; 18:321–336.
30. Aschner M, Aschner JL. Mercury neurotoxicity: mechanisms of blood-brain barrier transport. *Neurosci Biobehav Rev* 1990; 14: 169-76.

31. Sugita M. The biological half-time of heavy metals: the existence of a third, "slowest" component. *Int Arch Occup Environ Health* 1978; 41:25-40.
32. Personal communication, Andrew Cutler PhD
33. Geier DA, Pretorius HT, Richards NM, Geier MR. A quantitative evaluation of brain dysfunction and body-burden of toxic metals. *Med Sci Monit* 2012 Jul; 18(7):CR425-31.
34. Aposhian HV. DMSA and DMPS: water soluble antidotes for heavy metal poisoning. *Annu Rev Pharmacol Toxicol* 1983; 23:193-215.
35. Aposhian HV, Maiorino RM, Gonzalez-Ramirez D, Zuniga-Charles M, Xu Z, Hurlbut KM, et al. Mobilization of heavy metals by newer, therapeutically useful chelating agents. *Toxicology* 1995 Mar 31; 97(1-3):23-38.
36. Rooney JP: The role of thiols, dithiols, nutritional factors and interacting ligands in the toxicology of mercury. *Toxicology* 2007; 234(3):145-156.
37. Sweetman S. DMSA: meso-2, 3-dimercaptosuccinic acid (Succimer, Chemet, Captomer). In: Sweetman SC, editor. *Martindale: The Complete Drug Reference*. London (UK): Pharmaceutical Press; 2002: 1024–26.
38. Cutler AH. *Amalgam Illness: diagnosis and treatment*. 1st ed. Sammamish (WA, USA): Self-published; 1999.
39. Klinghardt D. The DMPS Challenge. Available from URL: <http://www.klinghardtacademy.com/Articles-with-Protocols/DMPS-Challenge.html>
40. Crinnion WJ: The benefits of pre- and post-challenge urine heavy metal testing: part 1. *Altern Med Rev* 2009 Mar; 14(1):3-8.
41. Crinnion WJ: The benefit of pre- and post-challenge urine heavy metal testing: part 2. *Altern Med Rev* 2009 June; 14(2):103-8.
42. Berglund M, Lind B, Björnberg KA, Palm B, Einarsson Ö, Vahter M. Inter-individual variations of human mercury exposure biomarkers: A cross-sectional assessment. *Environ Health: A Global Access Science Source* 2005; 4 (20).
43. McDowell MA, Dillon CF, Osterloh J, Bolger PM, Pellizzari E, Fernando R, et al. Hair mercury levels in U.S. children and women of childbearing age: reference range data from NHANES 1999-2000. *Environ Health Perspect* 2004 Aug; 112(11):1165-71.
44. Cutler AH. *Hair test interpretation: finding hidden toxicities*. 1st ed. Sammamish (WA, USA): Self-published; 2004.
45. Hahnemann SC. *Essay on a New Principle for Ascertaining the Curative Power of Drugs*. In: Lindsley TB. *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Hahneman*. Philadelphia: Boericke and Tafel; 1895.
46. Hahnemann SC. *Materia Medica Pura*. Vol I. New York (NY): Boericke and Tafel; 1880.
47. Hahnemann SC. *Organon of Medicine: The First Integral English Translation of the Definitive Sixth Edition of the Original Work on Homeopathic Medicine*. Kunzli J, Naude A, Pendleton P. Blaine (WA, USA): Cooper Publishing; 1982.

About the authors: *Corresponding Author: Dale Dunn, D.C., L.Ac., Dipl. Ac.(NCCAOM), D.N.B.H.E, is in private practice at Synergy Health Systems in Oak Park, Illinois and is a student in the Master's of Advanced Clinical Practice program at the National University of Health Sciences in Lombard, Illinois. He is board certified in acupuncture/Chinese medicine and homeopathy and has lectured on functional/integrative medicine, homeopathic medicine and Chinese medicine. E-mail:daledunn@student.nuhs.edu. Timothy Fior, M.D., D.Ht. is a lecturer in clinical sciences at National University of Health Sciences in Lombard Illinois, founding member, former President and current Vice-President of the Illinois Homeopathic Medical Association, and has been in private practice in family practice and homeopathy for the last 25 years. Since 1996 he has maintained a practice at the Center for Integral Health in Lombard, Illinois. He has lectured extensively at many of the medical schools in Chicago and has been often quoted in lay publications about homeopathy.*