

Chewing Gum Releases Mercury From Dental Fillings

Stockholm - Heavy gum chewers risk breaking down the amalgam in their dental fillings and having dangerously high levels of mercury in their blood and urine as a result, a study published in the Stockholm newspaper *Aftonbladet* on Friday said.

The study was undertaken by the Sahlgrenska university hospital in Gothenburg, west Sweden.

"In our study we found out that people who chewed gum for at least five hours per day had significantly higher mercury levels in their urine and blood," medical researcher Gerd Saellsten was quoted as saying.

The test group included 17 people with at least five amalgam fillings who chewed gum an average of five hours per day, and consumed seven pieces of gum.

The test group was compared with a control group of equal size comprising people with the same number of fillings, but who chewed gum only 30 minutes per week on average.

A comparison of quicksilver levels between the two groups yielded clear differences.

The heavy gum chewers had twice the amount of mercury in their blood and three times the level in their urine and breath exhalation than did the infrequent chewers.

The mercury levels rose in proportion to the number of amalgam fillings the subjects had, the study showed.

Mercury damages the brain, central nervous system and kidneys in humans