



American Dental Association  
www.ada.org

March 6, 2008

Julie L. Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Building 21  
1600 Clifton Road, N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Director Gerberding:

The recent report of lead in a dental prosthesis produced in an overseas dental laboratory is of great concern to the 155,000 members of the American Dental Association (ADA). It is the ADA's understanding that there are no Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved materials that contain any lead beyond so-called trace amounts, and we are urging our members to seek assurances from their dental laboratory suppliers that only FDA-approved materials are used in dental lab work. Based on the information presented in the media thus far, it does not appear that this is a widespread problem. However, the health and safety of our patients is the primary concern of all dentists, and we are eager to get complete information on the extent of any problems with materials used in dental labs—foreign or domestic—as quickly as possible, and to share that information with the public as soon as it becomes available.

Staff members from the ADA divisions of Science and Government and Public Affairs already have been in contact with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Oral Health Division. We are undertaking our own efforts to study the problem, including random, objective testing of prosthetics from both overseas and domestic labs and will be happy to share that information with the CDC. Of course, any such testing by the ADA is no substitute for the CDC and other government agencies performing their mandated functions to protect the health and safety of the public. Although we are not aware of any risk to health based on the small amount of information available, we and our patients are looking to CDC to affirm that this is true or, if it is not, take to appropriate steps to protect the public. Accordingly, we request that the CDC keep the ADA informed of its efforts to identify the extent of the potential contamination and the health effects of lead in dental prosthetics as well as any CDC plans for action. We believe working together we can enhance the public safety and confidence.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Frank Kyle in our Government Relations Office in Washington, DC at 202-789-5175 or e-mail [kylef@ada.org](mailto:kylef@ada.org) or Dr. John Kuehne in the ADA's Division of Science at 312-440-2505 or [kuehnej@ada.org](mailto:kuehnej@ada.org).

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mark J. Feldman, D.M.D. in black ink.

Mark J. Feldman, D.M.D.  
President

Handwritten signature of James B. Bramson, D.D.S. in black ink.

James B. Bramson, D.D.S.  
Executive Director

MJF:JBB:fk

cc: Dr. Janet L. Collins