



Potential Sources of Mercury In Health Care Facilities

Health care facilities use a variety of products that contain mercury including; thermometers, blood pressure cuffs, fluorescent lamps, batteries, and lab chemicals. Mercury is released from hospitals by: incineration of medical waste; land filling of mercury-containing solid waste; and releases of mercury containing chemicals into wastewater. Hospitals have an opportunity to play a key role in protecting public health and the environment by minimizing the use and release of mercury-containing products and waste. To reduce mercury at your facility consider implementing the following; a program to identify and reduce mercury-containing supplies and equipment, policies regarding the purchase of mercury-containing products and written procedures for spill clean-up and safe disposal of elemental mercury and mercury-containing products and equipment.

Patient Care Equipment

Mercury thermometers
Sphygmomanometers
Button batteries (mercury oxide and mercury zinc) used in pacemakers, hearing aids, etc.
Weighted esophageal dilators
Weighted Cantor tubes
Weighted Miller-Abbott tubes
Feeding tubes
Incubator thermostats
Dental amalgams

Laboratory Chemicals

Zenker's Solution
Thimerosal
Carbol-fuchin stain
Carbol gentian violet
Gram iodine stain
Mercurochrome
Immu-sal
Carmoy-Lebrun
Shardin
Takata's reagent
Golgi's
Alum hematoxylin (Solution A)
Million's reagent
Shardin
Nessler's solution
Phenylmercuric acetate

Laboratory Chemicals cont'd ...

Mucorex
Ohlamacher
Cajal's
Camco
Cesium Internal Std.
Mercury chloride
Mercury (II) oxide
Mercury (II) chloride
Mercury iodide
Mercury nitrate
Mercury sulfate
Merthiolate
Channing's Solution
B₅ Fixative
Helly
Gomori's
Stabilur tablets

Facility Equipment

Mercury-containing lamps (fluorescent, ultraviolet, HID)
Thermostats with mercury switches (e.g., non – electronic thermostats)
Gauges with liquid mercury
Equipment with mercury switches (e.g., tilt or “silent” switches)
Displacement/Plunger relay
Vacuum system (may contain mercury using manometers)
Flame sensor/safety valve (in gas-fired equipment)