



American Dental Association  
www.ada.org

March 18, 2008

Andrew C. von Eschenbach, M.D.  
Commissioner  
Food and Drug Administration  
Parklawn Building  
5600 Fishers lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Commissioner von Eschenbach:

Since late February, when an Ohio media outlet first reported findings of lead in a dental prosthesis produced in an overseas dental laboratory, the American Dental Association (ADA) has taken steps to alert dentists and provide information to the public.

In spite of no new information on the possible extent of this problem, media reports on 'contaminated' dental materials produced in foreign dental laboratories have become more frequent. The reports have an increasingly alarming tone and a sense of urgency since we first wrote to you on March 6. As a result, dentists are fielding more inquiries from concerned patients and there are disquieting reports of patients declining recommended treatment because of unsubstantiated fears.

We are eager to understand the extent of any problems with dental materials, whether they are produced in foreign or domestic dental laboratories. In particular, we ask that you provide some context for claims of possible health impacts of lead in dental prosthesis in the amounts reported in the media. While recognizing that much remains to be learned about this issue, some general information from the FDA about the likelihood of harm would be of great interest to both dentists and patients and should come from the federal agency whose mission is to protect the public's health.

We also look to your agency to reassure patients that recommended dental treatment should not be ignored. The ADA is asking both the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to consider providing a media update that will reassure the public that government agencies are taking appropriate steps to protect dental patients and that oral health care should not be postponed.

**Washington Office**

1111 14th Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005  
p 202-898-2400 f 202-898-2437

Commissioner von Eschenbach  
March 18, 2008  
page 2

If we can provide any assistance to your media relations staff, we would be happy to do so. 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). Thank you for your continued efforts to protect public safety and health.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mark J. Feldman, D.M.D. in cursive script.

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

Handwritten signature of James B. Bramson, D.D.S. in cursive script.

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

MF:JB:fk

cc: Dr. Daniel G. Schultz