

The Five Most Common Toxic Heavy Metals Sources and General Physiological Effects

Metal	Sources	General Physiological Effects
Aluminum	Antacids, antiperspirants, baking powders, beverage/food cans, buffered aspirin, canned foods, city water supplies, cookware and utensils, cosmetics, foil, lipstick, ore smelting plants, processed cheeses, etc.	Abundant in today's environment and toxic in excessive quantities, aluminum is mostly absorbed through the skin, lungs, and intestinal tract. Aluminum toxicity seems to affect the bones (causing brittleness or osteoporosis), kidneys, stomach and brain. Research suggests that it may also contribute Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, dementia, and other neurological disorders.
Arsenic	Chemical processing plants, cigarette smoke, drinking water, fungicides, meats and seafood, metal foundries, ore smelting plants, pesticides, polluted air, specialty glass products, weed killers, wood preservatives, etc.	Extremely poisonous as well as colorless and odorless, arsenic can enter the body through the mouth, lungs and skin. Arsenic toxicity seems to predominantly affect the skin, lungs and gastrointestinal system, and may cause nervous disorders, deteriorated motor coordination, respiratory diseases, and kidney damage as well as cancers of the skin, liver, bladder and lungs.
Cadmium	Air pollution, batteries, ceramic glazes/enamels, cigarette smoke (both first and second hand), tap and well water, food (if grown in cadmium contaminated soil), fungicides, mines, paints, power and smelting plants, seafood, etc.	Exposure to cadmium can occur through inhalation or ingestion in places or situations where cadmium products are used, manufactured, or ingested. Cigarette smoke is the biggest source of cadmium toxicity, which seems to primarily affect the lungs, kidneys, bones, and immune system. It may lead to lung cancer, prostate cancer and heart disease, and also causes yellow teeth and anemia. Cadmium also seems to contribute to autoimmune thyroid disease.
Lead	Air pollution, ammunition, auto exhaust, batteries, containers for corrosives, contaminated soil, cosmetics, fertilizers, foods (if grown in lead-contaminated soil), hair dyes, insecticides, lead-based paints, lead-glazed pottery, pesticides, solder, tobacco smoke, water (if transported via lead pipes), etc.	Lead is a naturally-occurring neurotoxin. Although many lead containing products (such as gasoline and house paints) were banned in the 1970s, contamination still occurs today mostly by drinking lead contaminated water, breathing lead-polluted air, and living in or near older painted buildings and certain toxic industrial areas. Lead toxicity primarily targets the nervous system, kidneys, bones, heart and blood, and poses greatest risk to infants, young children and pregnant women. It can affect fetal development, delay growth, and may also cause attention deficit disorder, learning disabilities, behavioral defects, and other developmental problems.
Mercury	Air pollution, barometers, batteries, cosmetics, dental amalgam fillings, freshwater fish (such as bass and trout), fungicides, insecticides, laxatives, paints, pesticides, saltwater fish (such as tuna and swordfish), shellfish, tap and well water, thermometers, thermostats, vaccines, etc.	Both poisonous and dangerous, mercury is found throughout our environments in many forms and also in many household items. Mercury often permeates the ground we walk on, and is also found in some childhood vaccines today because of its use as a preservative. Mercury as used in dental fillings is the primary source of toxic exposure, and in vapor form accounts for the majority of all exposures (via inhalation). Mercury toxicity can affect the central nervous system, kidneys and liver. Research suggests that this heavy metal may also contribute to autism and multiple sclerosis.