

# Mercury Quiz Show

## *Health Effects*

1. Which character in "Alice in Wonderland" was crazy due to mercury poisoning?
  - a. Alice
  - b. Mad Hatter
  - c. Cheshire Cat
  - d. March Hare
  - e. Queen of Hearts
2. Mercury is a very hazardous chemical that can cause serious health problems for children.
  - Yes
  - No
3. People can be exposed to mercury by:
  - a. Breathing mercury vapors
  - b. Eating mercury contaminated fish
  - c. Touching mercury
  - d. All of the above
4. Levels of mercury in the air that you normally breathe do not present a significant health risk.
  - Yes
  - No
5. Can a broken thermometer in a home expose a family to potentially dangerous levels of mercury?
  - Yes
  - No
6. Fish may contain mercury that can affect children's health.
  - Yes
  - No
7. Is mercury more of a health concern for fetuses, children and infants than adults?
  - Yes
  - No
8. What are the effects of mercury poisoning?
  - a. Headaches and getting tired
  - b. Shaking and loss of coordination
  - c. Memory loss
  - d. All of the above

## *Facts:*

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is present throughout the environment.

Methylmercury (an organic form of mercury) is highly toxic.

Health problems caused by mercury depend on how much has entered your body, how it entered your body, how long you have been exposed to it, and how your body responds to the mercury.

For more information contact:  
The University of Georgia  
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Housing & Environment Program  
[www.fcs.uga.edu/housing](http://www.fcs.uga.edu/housing)

# Mercury Quiz Show

## Qualities

1. What color is mercury?
  - a. Blue
  - b. Green
  - c. Purple
  - d. Silver
2. Name a liquid metal.
  - a. Mercury
  - b. Gold
  - c. Orange Juice
  - d. Water
3. Name a metal that evaporates at room temperature.
  - a. Horseradish
  - b. Milk
  - c. Mercury
  - d. Gold
4. Will mercury will sink through water?
  - Yes
  - No
5. If a mercury thermometer were broken, would the mercury slowly evaporate until cleaned up?
  - Yes
  - No
6. Mercury is commonly used in which of the following ?
  - a. Thermometers
  - b. Baseball bats
  - c. Mashed potatoes
  - d. None of the above
7. Which of the following is not one of mercury's qualities?
  - a. Heavier or denser than water
  - b. Silver in color
  - c. A liquid metal
  - d. Slowly vaporizes at room temperature
  - e. Turns purple when mixed with air

## Facts:

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is present throughout the environment.

When liquid mercury is spilled, it forms droplets that can accumulate in the tiniest of spaces and then emit vapors into the air.

Mercury vapor in the air is odorless, colorless, and very toxic. Most mercury exposures occur by breathing vapors, by direct skin contact or by eating food or drinking water contaminated with mercury.

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# Mercury Quiz Show

## Potpourri

1. What is a common name for mercury?
  - a. Quicksilver
  - b. Space goo
  - c. There are no other names for mercury
2. Is it possible to destroy mercury?
  - Yes
  - No
3. Mercury primarily moves around in the environment by:
  - a. Vapors that move to air
  - b. Deposits from air
  - c. By being dissolved in water
  - d. All of the above
4. How does mercury naturally enter the environment?
  - a. Forest fires and burning
  - b. Volcanic activity
  - c. Mercury in rocks and soil is dissolved when exposed to water
  - d. All of the above
5. Since mercury is a naturally occurring metal found throughout the environment, we are all exposed to low levels in our air, water and food.
  - Yes
  - No
6. How could you tell if you found a jar of mercury?
  - a. It would be heavy, the contents would be silver and move like a liquid
  - b. It would be light, the contents would be white and look like powder
  - c. None of the above
7. What would you do if you found a jar of mercury?
  - a. Leave it alone and contact an adult asking them to dispose of it
  - b. Run away and tell Sponge Bob
  - c. Tell your dog
8. How do human activities spread mercury in the environment?
  - a. Burning coal at power plants
  - b. Burning garbage
  - c. Burning hospital garbage
  - d. All of the above

## Facts:

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is present throughout the environment.

Mercury pollution is released into the air from the burning of fossil fuels.

It falls down directly onto waterways or is deposited on land where it can be washed into the water.

Bacteria in the water cause chemical changes that transform mercury into a highly toxic form - methylmercury.

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# Mercury Quiz Show

## *You Can Help*

1. Mercury thermometers can be replaced with which of the following?
  - a. Alcohol thermometers
  - b. Digital thermometers
  - c. All of the above
2. What are common sources of mercury in your school?
  - a. Thermometers
  - b. Batteries
  - c. Principal's office
  - d. A and B
3. Should clothes contaminated with mercury be dried in the clothes dryer?
  - Yes
  - No
4. Should spilled mercury be picked up with a household vacuum cleaner?
  - Yes
  - No
5. Why is mercury difficult to clean up after it has been spilled?
  - a. It is a liquid that can split up and roll away
  - b. It cannot be picked up by hand
  - c. It can get into carpet fibers
  - d. All of the above
6. What are common sources of mercury in a home?
  - a. Thermometers
  - b. Thermostats
  - c. Maze toys
  - d. Chemistry sets
  - e. Vials of mercury or necklaces
  - f. All of the above
7. What should your parents do if they find a broken mercury thermometer at home?
  - a. Open windows
  - b. Pick up as much mercury as possible with a sheet of paper
  - c. Place the mercury in a sealed glass jar
  - d. Cut up any exposed carpet and place in a sealed jar
  - e. Contact your local county or city waste collection center
  - f. All of the above

## *Facts:*

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is present throughout the environment.

Mercury fever thermometers are a significant source of mercury to the environment, and if a broken mercury thermometer isn't cleaned up properly, the mercury can get into the air and pose a health risk in the user's home.

There are several good, environmentally-friendly alternatives to mercury thermometers.

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# Mercury Quiz Show

## Animals

1. What animals are most likely to have high mercury levels?
  - a. Large Fish
  - b. Snakes
  - c. Horses
  - d. Dogs
2. Can mercury get into a lake or the ocean and contaminate fish?
  - Yes
  - No
3. As larger fish eat smaller fish, mercury concentrates in the larger fish. Does this process move mercury up the food chain?
  - Yes
  - No
4. Why does the Georgia Department of Natural Resources publish a pamphlet called *Guidelines for Eating Fish from Georgia Waters*?
  - a. To help protect people from experiencing health problems associated with eating contaminated fish
  - b. To tell people how often certain fish can be safely eaten
  - c. All of the above
5. What fish species have the highest levels of mercury and should not be eaten by small children?
  - a. Shark
  - b. Swordfish
  - c. King Mackerel
  - d. Tilefish
  - e. All of the above

## Facts:

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is present throughout the environment.

Mercury concentrations in air are usually low and of little direct concern.

But when mercury enters water, biological processes transform it to a highly toxic form that builds up in fish and animals that eat fish.

People are exposed to mercury primarily by eating fish.

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# Mercury Quiz Show

## *Answer Key*

### *Health Effects*

1. B
2. Yes
3. D
4. Yes
5. Yes
6. Yes
7. Yes
8. D

### *Qualities*

1. D
2. A
3. C
4. Yes
5. Yes
6. A
7. E

### *Potpourri*

1. A
2. No
3. D
4. D
5. Yes
6. A
7. A
8. D

### *You Can Help*

1. C
2. D
3. No
4. No
5. D
6. F
7. F

### *Animals*

1. A
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. C
5. E

*"Animals" Question 4 Source:  
The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD)  
Guidelines for Eating Fish From Georgia Waters*

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