

Mercury Hair Sampling in Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders

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DESCRIPTION:

While the role of mercury in ASD is unclear and unvalidated, recent research has found that infants with ASD have significantly lower rates of mercury in hair samples; suggesting they may have less ability to eliminate this toxin. It is not known whether a low rate of mercury elimination persists in individuals with ASD into adulthood, and this study seeks to address this question. More specifically, this study aims to establish typical mercury hair levels in the 18-31 year old age group. We are looking at the effects of two exposure variables: (1) amount of fish consumption and (2) number of silver amalgam fillings. We will also compare our group results with the findings of a comparison group of typical young adults at Wheaton College and other community settings.