

Although Abraham Lincoln was well known for his patience during his presidency, earlier in his political career he had frequent outbursts of uncontrollable rage. During a debate in 1858, he picked up a man by his collar and shook him “until his teeth chattered.” Lincoln may have been poisoned by the pills he took to fight depression. The pills contained **mercury** in potentially lethal doses that exceeded today’s safety limits by almost 9,000 times. The ingestion of **mercury** could explain Lincoln’s symptoms of insomnia, tremors and rage attacks. He stopped taking the **mercury** pills in 1861, shortly after assuming the presidency because they made him “cross.” If Lincoln hadn’t stopped taking the little blue pills, his composure during the Civil War might have been markedly different or he might have died before the war ended.