



## Community Water Fluoridation

### FACTS

- Community water fluoridation remains the safest, most effective method for preventing and reducing tooth decay.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) calls fluoridation one of the 10 great public health interventions of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- More than 60 years of research has shown water fluoridation to be safe and effective.
- Community Water Fluoridation is supported by numerous scientific organizations, including:
  - American Dental Association (ADA)
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - American Medical Association (AMA)
  - American Academy of Pediatrics
  - American Public Health Association
  - World Health Organization (WHO)
  - American Water Works Association (AWWA)

<http://www.dentalwatch.org/fl/orgs.html>
- Community Water Fluoridation reduces dental decay by 25% - 40%.
- Despite widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, community water fluoridation provides at least 25% of the individual reduction in dental cavities.
- A 2005 Colorado study showed that community water fluoridation contributed to an annual savings of \$149 million in avoided dental treatment, about \$61 per person.
- The average cost to fluoridate for one year is \$1-3 per person.
- Fluoride is a naturally occurring element in all water sources.
- Not all communities have enough naturally occurring fluoride to effectively prevent and reduce tooth decay, so they add it.

### SAFETY

- The overwhelming weight of credible scientific evidence has consistently indicated that fluoridation of community water supplies is safe.
- According to the CDC, there is no association between water fluoridation and any adverse health effect or systemic disorder, including an increased risk for cancer, Down syndrome, heart disease, osteoporosis and bone fracture, immune disorders, low intelligence, renal disorders, Alzheimer disease, or allergic reactions.
- According to the ADA, it is safe to use fluoridated water to mix infant formula. If the baby is only fed formula, using fluoridated water might increase the chance of mild enamel fluorosis.
  - Dental Fluorosis is a cosmetic concern that does not pose a public health risk and will not result in cavities or other dental problems.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- On Jan. 7, 2011, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a joint statement regarding proposed changes to the level of fluoride in drinking water necessary for the prevention of dental decay. The proposed recommendation, based on emerging research and proliferation of other fluoride products, lowers the recommended level of fluoride in drinking water to a single static level of 0.7 mg/L, from the previous range of 0.7 – 1.2 mg/L.
- CDPHE will wait for a **final HHS recommendation** before making recommendations to Colorado water operators. The final recommendation is expected this year (2012). Until then, CDPHE supports the current recommendation by the HHS for optimal fluoride levels.
- Community Water Fluoridation is determined locally in Colorado.
- CDPHE named oral health a top 10 winnable battle, with a goal of 75 percent of Coloradans served by community water systems that optimally fluoridate water by 2016.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

CDC (Centers for Disease Control) Community Water Fluoridation

<http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/index.htm>

ADA (American Dental Association)

<http://www.ada.org/fluoride.aspx>

PEW Charitable Trusts (Children's Dental Campaign)

<http://www.pewstates.org/research/analysis/water-fluoridation-frequently-asked-questions-85899379776>

<http://www.ilikemyteeth.org/>

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