

Water Fluoridation

Fluoridation Facts

- Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral in almost all water supplies. However, it is not always present at the level needed to help prevent cavities. Water fluoridation is simply the process of adjusting the amount of fluoride in drinking water to the recommended level for optimal dental health.
- Fluoridated water helps protect teeth by remineralizing tooth enamel and making it more resistant to cavities. When tap water has an optimal level of fluoride (0.7 ppm), people experience **25% less tooth decay over a lifetime**.
 - Studies reporting adverse impacts of water fluoridation have used a dosage almost double this amount.
- Water fluoridation has been around for over 75 years. Countless scientific studies have supported the safety and effectiveness of optimal community water fluoridation.
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers **community water fluoridation** one of the ten greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.
- Fluoridated water keeps a low level of fluoride in the mouth throughout the day, while fluoride toothpaste delivers higher concentrations at important times of the day. The CDC states that water fluoridation and fluoride toothpaste work together to help prevent tooth decay and offer more protection against decay than using either one alone.

Like wearing seat belts or adding iodine to salt, community water fluoridation is a simple step to greatly improve the health of an entire community.

Did You Know?

- Fluoride is one of the most researched minerals in public health, and about 75% of U.S. water supplies have added fluoride.
- **Research shows** significant increases in tooth decay in numerous communities after the removal of fluoride from water supplies.
- Cities save an estimated **\$20 in dental cost for every \$1** invested in fluoridation.
- Nearly 100 national and international organizations recognize the public health benefits of community water fluoridation for preventing dental decay, including the American Dental Association, the U.S. Public Health Service, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the International Association for Dental Research, the National PTA and the American Cancer Society.
- In 1995, CDA advanced community water fluoridation throughout the state by sponsoring Assembly Bill 733, legislation that requires communities with 10,000 or more water connections to fluoridate when funding becomes available to do so.
- Since then, the number of Californians receiving fluoridated water has quadrupled, going from 17% of the population to 57%. Today, over 21 million Californians have access to optimal community water fluoridation. However, California still ranks 37th among states in the percentage of the population receiving fluoridated water.

Court Ruling

A federal court ruled on Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2024, against the EPA, ordering the agency to further evaluate potential health risks from currently recommended fluoride levels in the U.S. drinking water supply. Read more **from the ADA** about the case.