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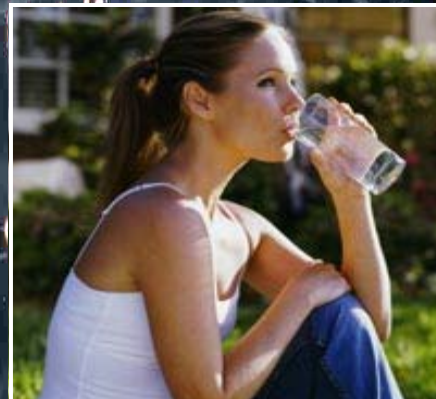
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# Community Water Fluoridation

A GREAT WAY TO PREVENT DENTAL DECAY




## What is Community Water Fluoridation?

All drinking water supplies contain some fluoride naturally. Getting the right amount of fluoride is important to prevent tooth decay. Water plant operators continuously monitor the fluoride content of drinking water in communities that are fluoridated.

The recommended level of fluoride in drinking water is 0.7 mg/L. The addition of fluoride to a water supply does not change the taste, color, odor, or cause any other such changes to the water. The only change is the reduction of dental disease for children and adults.

**Community water fluoridation is the process of adjusting the fluoride content that occurs naturally in a community's water to the best level for preventing tooth decay.**



## What are the Benefits of Community Water Fluoridation?

Studies conducted in the United States and other countries during the past 70 years show that community water fluoridation prevents tooth decay. Because fluoride is so successful in preventing decay, it is incorporated into many dental care products, such as toothpastes, mouth rinses and varnish. Most people in non-fluoridated communities now receive some protection against cavities from fluoride in these dental care products and in food and beverages processed in fluoridated communities. Although people living in non-fluoridated communities benefit from other sources of fluoride, those living in fluoridated communities experience 18-40% less tooth decay. Having a healthy smile improves your quality of life.

**The measurable benefits of water fluoridation are:**

- 18 to 40 percent less dental decay in persons of all ages.
- More children free of dental decay.
- Fewer children having permanent teeth extracted because of decay.
- More adults keeping their teeth for a lifetime.
- Prevention and reversal of early stages of tooth decay in adults.
- Older adults less likely to develop decay on the roots of their teeth.
- Lower dental bills for repairing decayed teeth.
- Less need for procedures that require anesthesia and drilling.

## Why Fluoridate?

It has been demonstrated that fluoride's action in preventing tooth decay provides a benefit to both children and adults throughout their lives. Community Water Fluoridation saves money for both families and the health care system.

### Benefits of fluoridation include:

#### Prevents cavities



#### Prevents pain and suffering



#### Saves money



## Why is Community Water Fluoridation an Ideal Public Health Measure?

Community water fluoridation is effective, safe, inexpensive, and practical. Adults as well as children benefit from drinking fluoridated water through their lives. The average cost of fluoridation is about \$1.00 per person per year.



The entire community benefits from community water fluoridation, regardless of a person's age, income, level of education, or ability to get dental care. Everyone benefits when they drink fluoridated water and consume foods and beverages prepared with it. Because of water fluoridation, people are enjoying a lifetime of healthier teeth.

## Is Community Water Fluoridation Safe?

Absolutely! The safety of community water fluoridation has been studied more thoroughly than any other public health measure during the past 70 years. Clinical, animal, and laboratory studies since the 1930s support its safety.

## Who Supports Community Water Fluoridation?

Community water fluoridation has the unqualified approval of every major health organization in the United States and many other countries. The American Dental Association, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the American Medical Association, and the World Health Organization strongly endorse water fluoridation. Many organizations support fluoridation, including the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Cancer Society, American Dental Hygienists' Association, American Heart Association, American Public Health Association, and International Association for Dental Research.

## Is the Drinking Water in Your Community Fluoridated?

There are several ways to learn if your community maintains the recommended level of fluoride in its drinking water. Access My Water's Fluoride — a CDC website, phone a health professional in your community, contact your public water system, or check with your local, county, or state health department. Tap water can be tested at certain certified laboratories in Oklahoma for about \$26.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health urges you to support the adoption or continuation of community water fluoridation. Find out if your tap water is fluoridated. If it isn't, ask your political leaders and local health officials why not.

**R**emember, community water fluoridation reduces dental decay - and better oral health results in better overall health!

### In Summary:

- Fluoridation is an inexpensive and very effective way to reduce tooth decay.
- Fluoridation benefits children and adults when they drink fluoridated water and consume foods and beverages prepared with the water.
- Fluoridation is safe.
- Fluoridation provides benefits that continue for a lifetime.
- Fluoridation reduces the need for dental treatment and associated costs.
- Fluoridation complements sealants and varnish.



- Fluoridation, combined with good oral hygiene and a healthy diet will help you prevent dental disease.

**Happiness is a healthy mouth!**