

FLUORIDE

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Background on Fluoride

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral derived from fluorine found in all natural waters in varying concentrations. It is effective in preventing and reversing the early signs of dental caries (tooth decay). Research shows that it has reduced cavities in both children and adults, but is safe and effective only when used correctly. Fluoride is added to public water supplies at a concentration of 1 part per million (ppm). The maximum standard for fluoride in public and private water supplies is 4 ppm; set by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

Sources of Fluoride

- Toothpastes
- Beverages (not usually bottled water)
- Processed foods
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Vitamin and mineral supplements
- Mouth rinses stating "anti-cavity with fluoride"
- Dentists recommend 0.7 to 1.2 ppm in water
- It is estimated that we take in ~8mg of fluoride per day



For more information please contact
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Health Concerns

- Excessive fluoride: nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, increased salivation or thirst, Fluorosis (chalky opaque blotching on teeth, rust colored stains, surface pitting, and tooth brittleness)
- Children under 3 should not have fluoride in toothpaste as they can not spit effectively
- Children under 6 months do not need fluoride (6 months to 16 years do get fluoride)
- Lack of fluoride

Remedies

- Keep fluoride toothpastes, mouth rinses, and others away from children
- Supervise children's' tooth brushing
- Install reverse osmosis or distillation point-of-use systems

Why Test for Fluoride

- If there are children in the house
- If there are pregnant women or elderly in the house
- If someone has calcium, magnesium, or vitamin C deficiencies
- If someone has cardiovascular or kidney problems, or poor nutrition
- If you have recently installed a new well or pump

Acknowledgements

- Minnesota Extension Service
- Minnesota Department of Health
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- www.kidshealth.org