



Position statement on Community Water Fluoridation

Good oral health is essential to our overall health and well-being. In fact, tooth decay is one of the most common and widespread chronic diseases in Canada and worldwide.

Community water fluoridation is an important and often overlooked public health measure that has contributed over the last 70 years to the health of Canadians by preventing tooth decay and thereby improving oral health.

Fluoride is a mineral found naturally in almost all water sources, and in small amounts in food and soil. Fluoride helps to prevent tooth decay by strengthening the enamel layer and making teeth more resistant to acid attacks from plaque bacteria and sugars in the mouth. Water fluoridation is the process of adjusting the level of fluoride in the water to provide optimal dental health benefits.

The big advantage of community water fluoridation is that it benefits all residents in a community, regardless of age, socioeconomic status, education, oral hygiene practices, employment or access to routine dental care, making it a truly equitable public health practice.

Canadian and international studies agree that properly fluoridated water is safe. The likeliest adverse effect is an increased risk of mild dental fluorosis, which causes white specks to appear on the teeth and is usually unnoticeable. There is also no scientific evidence to suggest that children should avoid drinking fluoridated water at the accepted levels in Canadian drinking water.

Many governments and health organizations, including the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada, the Canadian Public Health Association, the Canadian Dental Association, the Canadian Medical Association and the World Health Organization support the fluoridation of drinking water as an important public health measure to prevent tooth decay.

Community water fluoridation remains a safe, cost effective and equitable public health practice and an important tool in protecting and maintaining the health and well-being of Canadians.

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