

Facts about Community Water Fluoridation



Healthcare Professionals

- 1 Community Water Fluoridation (CWF) is the controlled addition of a fluoride compound to a public water supply to achieve a concentration optimal for dental caries prevention.¹
- 2 Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease among American children. One of four children living below the federal poverty level experience untreated tooth decay.²
- 3 Water fluoridation prevents tooth decay by providing frequent and consistent contact with low levels of fluoride, ultimately reducing tooth decay by about 25 percent in children and adults.^{3, 4, 5, 6}
- 4 School-aged children living in fluoridated communities on average have 2.25 fewer decayed teeth compared with children living in unfluoridated communities.⁷
- 5 The safety and benefits of fluoride are well documented and have been reviewed comprehensively by many scientific and public health organizations.^{8, 9, 10}
- 6 CWF is one of the top ten greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.¹¹
- 7 Virginia's Board of Health recommends all public water systems in Virginia fluoridate their water.¹² Over 95 percent of Virginians whose homes are served by public water systems receive fluoridated water.¹³
- 8 CWF has been identified as the most cost-effective method of delivering fluoride to all members of the community regardless of age, educational attainment, or income level.^{14, 15, 16}
- 9 CWF is cost-saving, even for small communities.¹¹
- 10 For more information about your water, visit: My Water's Fluoride online at: www.nccd.cdc.gov/DOH_MWF/ or call your local water authority.

If you or your patients use water from a private well or other private source, fluoride levels should be checked by a laboratory. Contact VDH for more information:

www.vdh.virginia.gov/fluoride-information

- ¹ US Department of Health and Human Services. Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General. See also Public Health Service Recommendation for Fluoride Concentration in Drinking Water for Prevention of Dental Caries.
- ² Dye BA, Li X, Thornton-Evans G. Oral Health Disparities as Determined by Selected Healthy People 2020 Oral Health Objectives for the United States, 2009–2010.
- ³ Koulourides T. Summary of session II: Fluoride and the caries process. *Journal of Dental Research*. 1990;69 (Spec Iss):558.
- ⁴ Featherstone JD. Prevention and reversal of dental caries: Role of low level fluoride. *Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology*.
- ⁵ Truman B I, Gooch BF, Sulemana I, Gift HC, Horowitz AM, Evans CA, Carande-Kulis VG. (2002). Reviews of evidence on interventions to prevent dental caries, oral and pharyngeal cancers, and sports-related craniofacial injuries. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 23(1 SUPPL.), 21-54.
- ⁶ Griffin SO, Regnier E, Griffin PM, Huntley V. Effectiveness of fluoride in preventing caries in adults. *Journal of Dental Research*. 2007 May;86(5):410-5.
- ⁷ The US Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Summary of Task Force Recommendations and Findings. 2002.
- ⁸ Public Health Service. Review of Fluoride: Benefits and Risks. Report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Fluoride of the Committee to Coordinate Environmental Health and Related Programs.
- ⁹ McDonagh M, Whiting P, Bradley M, et al. A systematic review of public water fluoridation. NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, University of York, York, United Kingdom (2015) Published 2000.
- ¹⁰ Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health. The use of fluorides in Australia: Guidelines.
- ¹¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Achievements in Public Health, 1900-1999: Fluoridation of Drinking Water to Prevent Dental Caries.
- ¹² Policy Statement Regarding Community Water Fluoridation, Virginia State Board of Health, July 18, 2008.
- ¹³ My Water's Fluoride online at: www.nccd.cdc.gov/DOH_MWF/.
- ¹⁴ Burt BA, ed. Proceedings for the workshop: Cost-effectiveness of caries prevention in dental public health, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 17–19, 1989. *Journal of Public Health Dentistry*. 1989; 49(special issue):331-337.
- ¹⁵ Griffin SO, Jones K, Tomar SL. An economic evaluation of community water fluoridation. *Journal of Public Health Dentistry*. 2001;78-86.
- ¹⁶ Ran T, Chattopadhyay S. Economic Evaluation of Community Water Fluoridation: A Community Guide Systematic Review. The Community Preventive Services Task Force. CDC. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*. Vol 50, Iss 6; Jun 2016: 790-796.