

Dental Health



What's In The Water? Fluoridated Water And Its Benefits

(NAPS)—Brushing, flossing and regular trips to the dentist keep our smiles healthy and happy—that, we know. But what about the water you brush with and drink? Using fluoridated water will help your smile more than you think.

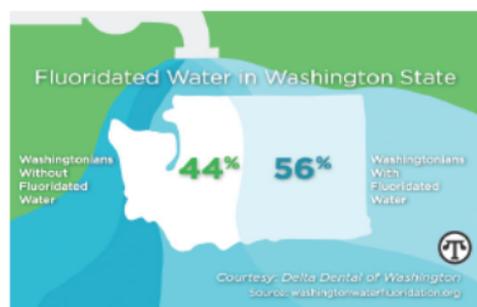
What is fluoridated water?

Almost all water has some amount of naturally occurring fluoride, but there must be enough of it to have an impact on oral health. Water fluoridation is the process of balancing levels for optimal teeth strengthening, which is a recommended concentration of 0.7 milligrams per one liter of water. This is what bonds weakened enamel in teeth to prevent decay.

Expert Opinions

“Fluoride use and community water fluoridation are safe and effective ways to prevent tooth decay in both children and adults,” said Nadia Fugate, DMD, a licensed dentist who serves as a Delta Dental of Washington dental consultant. “If you have an infant or child at home, and your community’s water is fluoride deficient (less than 0.6 ppm), it is important to discuss other alternatives with your child’s dentist early on for healthy and strong teeth.”

What The Studies Show



For more than 75 years now, communities across the U.S. have been drinking fluoridated water—and the results are clear. Since that switch, studies have shown a reduction in cavities of 25 percent. The result means not only healthier smiles but lowered dental costs for individuals and families as well.



Something as simple as water is a hidden oral hygiene helper.

Although about three quarters of Americans live in communities with fluoridated water, only 56 percent of Washingtonians live with fluoridated water. And the lack of access isn't spread across the state evenly—the lack of fluoridated water disproportionately impacts rural, low-income, and underserved communities—which are already at greater risk for medical and dental disparities.

Fluoride is so important, the Centers for Disease Control named it as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. Drinking just one pint of fluoridated water a day is what children need to be protected from tooth decay.

One added benefit is fluoridated tap water is cost-effective. For every \$1 spent on water fluoridation, the average person saves \$38 on dental procedures, according to the American Dental Association.

While fluoridated water may seem like a no-brainer, many continue to not have access to it. If your community does not have access to fluoridated water, consult your dentist on other options such as prescription fluoride toothpaste or oral supplements at your next regular checkup.

Learn More

For more information about your oral health, visit Delta Dental of Washington's blog at www.deltadentalwa.com/blog.