



9 Reasons to Fluoridate Public Water

Single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has proclaimed community water fluoridation one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.

Safe and effective. For more than 70 years, the best available scientific evidence consistently indicates that community water fluoridation is safe and effective.

Prevents dental disease. It is the most efficient way to prevent one of the most common childhood diseases – dental decay. An estimated 51 million school hours are lost each year due to dental-related illness.

Availability of fluoridation continues to grow. In 2014, 74.4 percent of the U.S. population on public water systems (211.4 million people) received fluoridated water. This is an increase of almost nine percent from 2000. The Healthy People 2020 goal is for 79.6 percent of the population on public water systems to have access to fluoridated water.

Natural. Fluoride is already present in all water sources, even the oceans. Water fluoridation is simply the adjustment of fluoride that occurs naturally to a recommended level for preventing tooth decay.

Similar to fortifying other foods and beverages. Water that has been fluoridated is similar to fortifying salt with iodine, milk with vitamin D, orange juice with calcium and bread with folic acid.

Protects all ages against cavities. Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents up to 25 percent of tooth decay in children and adults, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.

Saves money. The average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate a water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling. For most cities, every \$1 invested in water fluoridation saves \$20 in dental treatment costs.

Recognized by more than 100 organizations. The American Dental Association (ADA) as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization and more than 125 national and international organizations recognize the public health benefits of water fluoridation for preventing dental decay.

Source: American Dental Association, 2016

