



## Fluoridated Water Talking Points

### ASDA's Stance on Fluoridated Water

ASDA encourages fluoridation of community water as a scientifically proven, safe, and effective means of preventing dental decay.

### Common fluoridation misconceptions

#### **Fluoride isn't safe: FALSE**

- According to the [American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), many studies have proven the safety and benefits of fluoride. For 70 years, people in the United States have benefited from drinking water with fluoride.
- There are no known adverse health effects from community water fluoridation apart from dental fluorosis. Fluorosis is hypomaturation of a tooth from fluoride exposure. Fluorosis occurs when excess fluoride is ingested for an extended duration prior to enamel maturation, typically in children less than 8 years old. This does not usually occur solely from drinking water. It is a combination of exposure from multiple sources (food, water, fluoridated toothpaste, fluoridated mouth rinse, and fluoride supplements).
- The Environmental Protection Agency has recommended that concentrations of less than 2mg/L of fluoride should be maintained in drinking water in order to prevent fluorosis. In 2017, the EPA published results from a [six-year review](#) of drinking water regulations and confirmed this guideline to be appropriate. This guideline is far more than the concentration in community fluoridated water (0.7mg/L), ensuring that fluorosis is avoided.

#### **The fluoride used in water is manufactured and isn't beneficial like naturally-occurring fluoride: FALSE**

- The CDC reports on recent scientific studies demonstrating that the same fluoride ion is present in naturally occurring fluoride that exists in fluoride drinking water additives.

#### **The fluoridation of community water is expensive: FALSE**

- [Studies](#) show that community water fluoridation saves small and large communities money.
- According to a [study](#) cited on the CDC website, the annual costs for community water fluoridation ranges from \$0.11 to \$24.38 per capita, while annual benefits range from \$5.49 to \$93.19 per capita.

### Facts about Fluoridated Water

- Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral that is already present in almost all sources of natural water. By adding fluoride to drinking water, we are simply increasing the amount to that which is beneficial for teeth.
- The CDC reported that fluoridated water reduces cavities by 25% in both children and adults.

- Credible scientific research continues to support the notion that fluoridation of community water is safe.
- The cost of a lifetime of water fluoridation for one person is less than the cost of one filling. This results in less cost for both families and the healthcare system. In comparing the cost and savings of water fluoridation, a [study](#) found that for every \$1 invested in fluoridated water, most cities save \$38 in dental treatment costs.
- Fluoridated water contributes to less missed school and work days due to dental decay.
  - Early childhood caries is the most common chronic infectious disease in children. One in four children living below 100% of the federal poverty level have untreated tooth decay, which can result in pain, school absences, and poorer school performance.
  - Parents miss an average of 2.5 work days/year to care for a child with a dental problem.
  - Fluoridation can help prevent this decay.
- By bringing a water sample to a local testing site, most people can confirm for free that their water is meeting standards for fluoridation.
- Supporting organizations: American Dental Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, US Public Health Service, and the World Health Organization

### **Timeline of National Efforts**

- **2015:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services set the recommended optimal fluoride level in drinking water at 0.7 milligrams per liter of water
- **2015:** U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy called water fluoridation one of the most cost-effective and safe methods to preventing tooth decay
- **1999:** Centers for Disease Control named community water fluoridation one of the ten greatest public health achievements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- **1962:** U.S. Public Health Service recommended fluoride be added to community drinking water