

# Fluoride

The health benefits of fluoride for both children and adults are:

- ▶ Fewer cavities and less severe cavities.
- ▶ Less need for fillings and tooth extractions.
- ▶ Less pain and suffering associated with tooth decay.



Fluoride strengthens teeth in 2 ways:

- ▶ Fluoride that is swallowed (systemic fluoride) is absorbed by forming teeth and present in saliva.
- ▶ Fluoride in the form of varnishes, gels rinses and toothpastes (topical) can reverse the early stages of tooth decay in people of all ages.

Almost all water contains some naturally occurring fluoride, but usually at levels too low to prevent tooth decay.

The therapeutic range is from 0.6 to 0.8 parts per million and the **Maximum Acceptable Concentration** (MAC) of is 1.5 parts per million.

The Health Unit monitors all community water supply systems and fluoride concentration data is sent to the board of health on a monthly basis. Where necessary, action shall be taken in accordance with the *Safe Drinking Water and Fluoride Monitoring Protocol, 2023*.

Health Canada, The Canadian Dental Association, The Ontario Dental Association, and The Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry all support fluoridation of municipal drinking water as a safe, effective and economical means of preventing decay in all age groups.

**The Ontario Dental Association** states that “Fluoridation’s positive impact and safety are supported by hundreds of studies and nearly 70 years of experience. National and international health organizations continue to endorse water fluoridation. Its safety and effectiveness are frequently studied and continues to be supported by current science. Canadian and international studies agree that water that was fluoridated at optimum levels does not cause adverse health effects.”

(Source: <https://www.oda.ca/oral-health-basics/care-disease-prevention/water-fluoridation/>)

### To ensure that you are getting the right amount of fluoride:

- ▶ Check with your municipality to see if your community water is fluoridated
- ▶ Have your well water tested for fluoride content
- ▶ Use a toothpaste with fluoride
- ▶ Supervise your child’s tooth brushing, and do not allow your child to swallow toothpaste
- ▶ Consult a dental professional for more specific fluoride recommendations.



For more information  
call 1-800-660-5853  
or visit our website  
[www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)