



Fluoride

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Community Water Fluoridation?

Fluoride is one of the most plentiful elements on earth, and occurs naturally in water supplies throughout California and elsewhere but usually at levels too low to prevent tooth decay. The City of Antioch adjusts the fluoride concentration to a level known to reduce tooth decay and promote good oral health. This practice is known as community water fluoridation, and reaches all people who drink the City's water.

How Long has the City Been Adding Fluoride to the Drinking Water?

The City of Antioch was one of the first cities in California to fluoridate its drinking water. Fluoridation was voter approved in 1956 and has been in operation since the 1960s.

What is the Level of Fluoride in Drinking Water?

The regulatory optimal amount is 0.7 parts per million (ppm) with a range of 0.6 to 1.2 ppm. In 2017 the City of Antioch had an average of 0.72 ppm with a range of 0.6 to 0.95 ppm.

If I am Drinking Water With Fluoride, Why do I Also Need to Brush with Toothpaste that Contains Fluoride?

Both drinking water and toothpaste with fluoride provide important and complementary benefits. Fluoridated water keeps a low level of fluoride in saliva and dental plaque all day. The much higher concentration of fluoride in toothpaste offers additional benefit. Fluoride slows

the activity of bacteria that cause decay and combines with enamel on the tooth surface to make it stronger and better able to resist decay. Together, the two sources offer more protection than using either one alone.

Given that we get fluoride from other sources, should the City of Antioch still fluoridate its water to prevent tooth decay?

Consuming fluoridated water and other beverages and foods prepared or processed with fluoridated water is still important for prevention of decay. Ingesting fluoridated water throughout the day maintains a low level of fluoride in saliva and plaque that enhances the remineralization of weakened tooth surfaces. Community water fluoridation has been identified as the most cost-effective method of delivering fluoride to all members of the community regardless of age, educational attainment, income level, and the availability of dental care.

Has the Safety of Water Fluoridation Been Evaluated?

The Department of Drinking Water (DDW) is responsible for regulating the activities of fluoridation in California. This responsibility includes assuring water fluoridation is conducted in a safe and effective manner. Public water systems must obtain a permit from DDW to fluoridate their drinking water supplies and must monitor the fluoride levels in their water system on a daily basis. The operational and monitoring information is also reported to DDW.

Experts have weighed the findings and quality of available evidence and concluded that there is no association between water fluoridation and any unwanted health effects other than dental fluorosis.

What is Dental Fluorosis?

Dental fluorosis is a condition that causes primarily cosmetic changes in the appearance of tooth enamel.

Will Using a Home Water Filtration System Take the Fluoride out of my Home's Water?

Removal of fluoride from water is a difficult water treatment action. Most point-of-use treatment systems for homes that are installed on single faucets use activated carbon filtration, which will not remove the fluoride ion. Other treatment systems such as reverse osmosis, ion exchange, or distillation systems to reduce fluoride levels vary in their effectiveness. Check with the manufacturer of the individual product.