

Fluoride and Your Child's Teeth

The Benefits of Fluoride

Fluoride reduces dental decay by making the enamel harder, reducing the ability of bacteria to produce acid that erodes enamel, and by replacing minerals in the teeth after they have been lost.

In the cities of Bishop, Big Pine, Lone Pine, Mammoth Lakes and most surrounding communities natural fluoride content of the water is low and water supplies are not fluoridated.

Refer to the attached list for Fluoride levels in your community.

The level of fluoride in well water varies with location. Having your well water tested for fluoride is the only way to know if the level is adequate.

Adequate fluoride in the water is 0.3-1.2 ppm.

Most bottled water does not contain adequate amounts of fluoride. Home water treatment systems like reverse osmosis and distillation units remove much of the fluoride from tap water. However, carbon or charcoal water filtration systems generally do not remove substantial amounts of fluoride.

For children who drink water without adequate fluoride levels pediatricians and dentists advise daily fluoride supplements starting at 6 months of age and continuing until age 12 years.

Too Much Fluoride & Fluorosis:

Too much ingested fluoride during tooth development (until about age 8 years) can cause dental fluorosis. Fluorosis ranges from minor white lines that run across the teeth to a chalky appearance of the teeth with brown staining.

Fluorosis can be caused by drinking water with high levels of fluoride (typically greater than 1.2ppm), by swallowing too much fluoridated toothpaste or mouthwash, or by using supplements incorrectly.

Fluoride Recommendations for Your Child:

For all Children:

Fluoride varnish every three to six months until age five. Varnish can be applied in a few minutes at your child's dentist or doctor's office.

Start brushing twice a day with a small smear (rice sized amount) of **fluoride containing toothpaste** when the first teeth erupt. Increase to a pea size amount of toothpaste at age 2-3 years.

For Children who live in areas with low fluoride concentration in the water:

Give **fluoride supplements daily** starting at 6 months of age (ask your pediatrician for a prescription)

<http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/>