
DENTAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

FLUORIDE TEST

Fluoride in water can prevent cavities.

The right amount of fluoride in drinking water can reduce cavities in children by 20 to 40 percent. Some Wisconsin communities add fluoride to public drinking water supplies that do not have enough naturally occurring fluoride. However, many Wisconsin children whose drinking water comes from a public supply that is not fluoridated, or from a fluoride deficient private well, may not be getting enough fluoride for maximum dental health.

Does your water supply have enough fluoride?

If your drinking water comes from a city supply, contact your community's public health department or water works department to find out the fluoride concentration. If your water supply comes from a private well, the fluoride level can be determined by laboratory testing. You may have your water tested by contacting your local health department or by calling the State Laboratory of Hygiene, toll-free at (800) 442-4618 or (608) 224-6202.

The amount of fluoride supplements depends on the age of the child and the amount of fluoride naturally occurring in your water. Infants and toddlers need less fluoride than older children and teens.

The following chart shows whether supplements are recommended for children of different ages and water fluoride concentrations. Your physician or dentist can prescribe the correct dosage of these supplements based on your water test results.

Age in Years	Drinking Water Fluoride Concentration		
	Less than 0.3 mg/L*	0.3 to 0.6 mg/L	More than 0.6 mg/L
Birth to 6 months	no	no	no
6 months to 3	yes	no	no
3 to 6	yes	yes	no
6 to 16	yes	yes	no

*mg/L = milligrams per liter of water (an expression of concentration)
mg/L also equals parts per million (ppm).

For children who aren't getting enough fluoride in their drinking water, the Wisconsin Division of Public Health recommends fluoride supplements, as drops or tablets, be added to their diet.

Example: If your drinking water fluoride concentration is 0.1 mg/L and your child is two years old, he or she should receive supplements.

For more information

For more information about fluoride and cavity prevention, contact your dentist or physician. Additional information or assistance is also available by visiting the Oral Health Program web site at: http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/Health/Oral_Health/
Or by calling or writing:

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