
DENTAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

DIETARY FLUORIDE SUPPLEMENTS

FACT: THE ADMINISTRATION OF DIETARY FLUORIDE SUPPLEMENTS HAS BEEN SHOWN TO BE AN EFFECTIVE PROCEDURE FOR PREVENTING DENTAL CARIES.

Preventive benefits approach those derived from consuming optimally fluoridated drinking water over similar time periods. However, fluoride supplementation is not a substitute for community water fluoridation because the latter is far more economical and feasible for benefiting large numbers of children. Some communities fail to add fluoride to fluoride deficient systems, and many children live in rural areas with fluoride deficient private wells. Children on fluoride deficient community systems and on private wells deficient in fluoride should receive dietary fluoride supplements.

FACT: IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE FLUORIDE CONTENT OF THE PATIENT'S DRINKING WATER BE DETERMINED PRIOR TO PRESCRIBING FLUORIDE SUPPLEMENTS.

SUPPLEMENTAL FLUORIDE DOSAGE SCHEDULE			
Age In Years	Concentration of Fluoride in Drinking Water (ppm)		
	Less than 0.3	0.3 to 0.6	Greater than 0.6
6 months to 3 years	0.25*	0	0
3 to 6 years	0.50	0.25	0
6 to 16 years	1.00	0.50	0

* mg F per day (2.2 mg tablet of sodium fluoride contains 1 mg of fluoride)

FACT: IF PATIENTS ARE DRINKING COMMUNITY WATER, THE FLUORIDATION STATUS SHOULD BE KNOWN.

1. Is the community water fluoridated to optimal levels (1.1 parts per million for Wisconsin)?
If yes - no supplement is necessary
If no - supplement may be necessary
2. Is the community water naturally fluoridated at a level greater than 0.6 parts per million?
If yes - no supplement is necessary
If no - supplement may be necessary
3. If the community water is deficient in fluoride, what is the natural level?
Information regarding the fluoridation status of community water systems is available from:
 - (a) Local water departments
 - (b) Wisconsin Division of Public Health, 1 W. Wilson Street, Room 250,
P.O. Box 2659, Madison, WI 53701-2659

FACT: IF PATIENTS ARE DRINKING INDEPENDENT PRIVATE WELL WATER, THE WATER SHOULD BE TESTED FOR NATURAL FLUORIDE CONTENT.

Sample "kits" for testing may be obtained by sending \$19.50 to:
State Laboratory of Hygiene
2601 Agriculture Drive
Madison, WI 53707-7996 or by calling 1-800-442-4618

Some city and county health departments also provide testing services. Results may be sent directly to the dentist or physician.

OTHER FACTS AND ISSUES:

- Fluoride supplements are commercially available in the form of drops or tablets. A sample prescription may read:

Sodium fluoride tablets 2.2 mg
Sig: One tablet each day to be chewed and swished before swallowing
Caution: Store out of reach of children
- Supplements provide a topical as well as systemic effect. The tablets should be thoroughly chewed and swished between the teeth before swallowing. The child should not eat or drink for 30 minutes after supplement ingestion.