



The National Coalition of Dentists for Health Equity Statement on the Safety of Water Fluoridation

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Water fluoridation has been demonstrated for 80 years to significantly prevent dental caries (“cavities”), a bacterial infection that often causes considerable pain for children and can jeopardize their overall health. Children with cavities in their teeth cannot chew without discomfort, so their nutrition becomes compromised. The pain that they suffer causes loss of sleep, absences from and poor performance in school, and affects their mental and social development.

Because water fluoridation is cost-effective and is available to all members of a community regardless of socioeconomic status, **it is the most important method that we currently have for advancing oral health equity. Water fluoridation is effective in preventing a painful disease for the millions of poor children who have limited or no access to dental care services.**

Recent statements about water fluoridation and child IQ are based on observation studies conducted in countries outside of the US on pregnant mothers and children who have been exposed to fluoride levels that **far exceed the amount of fluoride added to municipal water supplies in the United States. Multiple research studies conducted in communities throughout the United States, where the fluoride levels meet US guidelines for municipal water fluoride levels, show no IQ deficiencies in children or adults.**

Municipalities should continue to add fluoride to their water supplies at the recommended concentration levels that have been proven to be safe in the US for 80 years.