

Statement on the Safety of Community Water Fluoridation

- [ADA Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct](#)
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Fluoridation of community water supplies is safe. This has been the American Dental Association's (ADA) policy since 1950. The ADA's policies regarding community water fluoridation are based on the overwhelming weight of credible scientific evidence. This body of knowledge is based on the efforts of nationally recognized scientists who have conducted research using the scientific method, have drawn appropriate balanced conclusions based on their research findings and have published their results in refereed (peer-reviewed) professional journals that are widely held or circulated such as *The Journal of the American Medical Association* and *The American Journal of Public Health*. Studies showing the safety of water fluoridation have been confirmed by independent scientific studies.

Fluoride is nature's cavity fighter occurring naturally in the earth's crust in combination with other minerals found in soil and rocks. Small amounts of fluoride occur naturally in all water sources. Water fluoridation is the process of adjusting the natural level of fluoride to a concentration sufficient to protect against tooth decay (0.7 to 1.2 parts per million). Fluoride in these low concentrations is not toxic or harmful.

Throughout more than 65 years of research and practical experience, the overwhelming weight of credible scientific evidence has consistently indicated that fluoridation of community water supplies is safe. The possibility of any adverse health effects from continuous low-level consumption of fluoride has been and continues to be extensively studied. Of the hundreds of credible scientific studies on fluoridation, none has shown health problems associated with the consumption of optimally fluoridated water.

In 2000, the U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher wrote in his report, *Oral Health in America*, "Community water fluoridation is safe and effective in preventing dental caries in both children and adults. Water fluoridation benefits all residents served by community water supplies regardless of their social or economic status." Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research continue to support water fluoridation as a safe method of preventing tooth decay in people of all ages.

Based on data for 2010, approximately 204 million people (two-thirds of the population) in the United States are served by public water systems that are fluoridated. The ADA, along with state and local dental societies, continues to work with federal, state, and local agencies to increase the number of communities benefiting from water fluoridation. For more information regarding fluoride and fluoridation, visit the [American Dental Association's Fluoride and Fluoridation website](#).