San Diego City and County Water Fluoridation

What is Fluoridation?

- The city of San Diego is joining with most of the county in a program of adding a very small amount of the mineral, Fluoride, to the amount found naturally in our drinking water.

Why fluoridate water?

- Scientists have shown that a small amount of fluoride in water helps protect teeth from developing cavities.
- The amount of fluoride added is about one- thousand times less than the amount in fluoride toothpaste.

How does fluoride work?

- Sugar “feeds” the bacteria in our mouth.
- Bacteria release acid that dissolves the minerals in tooth enamel.
- Extra fluoride in saliva helps return minerals to the tooth enamel, making it stronger against this ACID ATTACK.
- This can stop cavities from starting or getting bigger.

Is this safe?

- Yes, it is very safe and works to protect teeth at every age.
- It does not harm any plants or animals.
- It continues to work when used to make soups, cereals or drinks.

Fluoride and Young Children

- Children who have been taking extra fluoride in drops or tablets may not need to continue.
- Ask the doctor or dentist who prescribed the extra fluoride if it should be stopped now.
- Also ask your health provider about using tap water with baby formula concentrates <u>if that is the main source of your baby's nutrition.</u>

What about bottled water?

- Most bottled water does not have enough fluoride in it to protect teeth from cavities.
- Our tap water is very safe to drink.
- If you dislike the taste of tap water, you may use pitchers with carbon water filters or filters that attach to the faucet.
- Fluoride is tasteless and odorless.

What else helps stop cavities?

- Fluoride toothpaste— a tiny smear twice daily until child old enough to spit.
- Then a pea-size amount.
- Visit dentist and dental hygienist twice yearly for exam, preventive care and more tips.
- Take child by first birthday for exam.

Resources

- San Diego Fluoridation Coalition: Ellie Nadler, RDH, MPH;

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- San Diego County Dental Society:**www.sdcds.org/dental-information/fluoridation**
- City of San Diego fluoridation info:**www.sandiego.gov/water/quality/fluoridation.shtml**
- First 5 Commission website: **www.first5sandiego.org/community-water-fluoridation**
- **Centers for Disease Control on infant formula: www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/safety/infant_formula.htm**