



American Dental Association
www.ada.org

July 17, 2006

Ms. Polly Chevalier
Managing Editor
Prevention
33 E. Minor Street
Emmaus, PA 18098

Dear Ms. Chevalier:

Dentists, physicians and health care professionals across the country are understandably astounded and dismayed by your article, “The Danger in Your Water” (August 2006). Now is not the time to turn back the clock on over 60 years of research and practical experience by providing, in our opinion, misinformation to your readers on the safety and effectiveness of community water fluoridation. Today, studies prove water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing tooth decay by 20-40 percent, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.

We believe one of the most misguided portions of your article is the reference to the National Research Council’s report released last March. The fact is, the NRC report focused solely on the maximum level of *naturally* occurring fluoride in drinking water, **not** on community water fluoridation (which is the process of *adding* fluoride to water). Nowhere in the NRC report was the safety or effectiveness of community water fluoridation called into question.

Thanks to “Mother Nature,” fluoride is already present in all water, but it’s possible to get too much of a good thing. Think of Vitamin C—in the right amount, it’s good for your health, but if you take too much of it, you could put your health in jeopardy. In a nutshell, the NRC report recommended that the maximum level of naturally occurring fluoride in drinking water should be lowered from a maximum of 4 parts per million to prevent potential health risks. Community water fluoridation, on the other hand, is the process of adding fluoride to water to bring it up to a level of 0.7 – 1.2 parts per million which is the level proven to help prevent tooth decay.

Every day the media seems to pick up on a new “study” that can scare the public, but it’s far more important to consider the overall weight of scientific evidence. Rest assured that the benefit of community water fluoridation is well established. Why else would more than 100 organizations, including American Dental Association, the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics recognize the benefits of water fluoridation to prevent dental decay? I encourage your readers to visit these organizations’ web sites for more information. Here’s is a link to more information on the American Dental Association’s web site:

<http://www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/news.asp>.

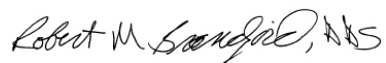
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Oh, and one more thing. While your article was quick to point out *no* votes on fluoridation, it neglected to mention that in 2005 communities in 11 states voted *yes* to fluoridation. Here's to better oral health!

Sincerely,



Robert M. Brandjord, D.D.S.
President



James B. Bramson, D.D.S.
Executive Director

RMB:LW:mlr