

Fluoride Fact, or Fiction

There is so much information available in print and from the internet about fluoride that it may be difficult to know what is accurate and what is misleading. Scientific information from all print and electronic sources must be critically reviewed before conclusions can be drawn.

The American Dental Association has developed key elements to look for when considering fluoride research:

- The author's background and credentials should reflect expertise in the area of fluoride research.
- The year of the publication should be apparent. The information should be relatively current, although well-designed studies can stand the test of time and scientific scrutiny. A review of the references used in a publication can be insightful into the sources of other subsequent studies.
- If the information is a review of other studies, it should be representative of the original research. Information quoted directly from other sources should be quoted in its entirety.
- The research should be applicable to community water fluoridation and use an appropriate type and amount of fluoride. The results of a study using a concentration of 125 parts per million (ppm) of fluoride are not comparable to the Burlington water fluoridation level of 1.1ppm.
- Animal studies should be carefully reviewed. Information obtained in animal studies may be highly questionable as a predictor of the effects of human exposure to low concentrations of fluoride, such as those used in the Burlington public water system.

The validity and relevance of claims made by opponents of fluoridation may be best viewed when measured against these key elements.

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