

# SAVE YOUR FANGS

Fluoride is a proven and essential mineral that helps prevent tooth decay — and that's the opposite of scary.

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# FLUORIDE IS NATURE'S CAVITY FIGHTER.



## Q. What is fluoride?

- A. Fluoride is nature's cavity fighter, a mineral found in most water: lakes, rivers, oceans and aquifers. But it's usually found at levels below what's needed to prevent tooth decay.

## Q. What does fluoride do for teeth?

- A. Fluoride strengthens tooth enamel – making it more resistant to decay. Fluoride replaces minerals lost to acid-attacks that occur when we eat.

## Q. What is fluorosis?

- A. Mild dental fluorosis leaves faint white marks on teeth when a person ingests too much fluoride. Severe fluorosis, which is very uncommon in the U.S., may cause brown spots. Fluorosis doesn't cause pain or affect the tooth's health **and it doesn't happen when a good balance of fluoride is provided.**

## Q. Is fluoride controversial?

- A. In most communities, it's not. About 73% of people in U.S. towns or cities live where fluoride is provided at a good balance. Fluoridation has made major improvements in dental health. But some groups try to distort the science to prevent fluoridation.

## Q. What's the benefit of a fluoridated water supply?

- A. It's the most efficient and cost-effective way to get a good balance of fluoride to everyone, regardless of their income, age or education. It is a public health standard. When you drink fluoridated water the minerals help prevent decay.

## Q. Does Spokane have fluoridated water?

- A. No. Spokane is the largest city in the state without fluoridated water, in part because a small but vocal group uses misinformation to dismiss this major public health success story.

## Q. In the absence of fluoridated water, how can residents access fluoride?

- A. There is no substitute for fluoridated water, but talk with your doctor and dentist about supplements or in-office treatments for yourself and your family. And use fluoride toothpaste.