



## Did you know?

*Cavities are the most common chronic disease in childhood and are 5 times more common than asthma. Fluoride helps to reduce the risk of cavities.*

# Fluoride

## What to know about Fluoride

### Fluoride treatment can help reduce the risk of cavities in children.

- Cavities ("tooth decay") contribute to children's health problems such as pain, infections (including meningitis), poor self-esteem, missed school, and poor school performance.
- New York City (NYC) adds small amounts of fluoride to drinking water to prevent cavities and strengthen teeth. These low levels have been shown to be safe.
- Some studies have shown changes in brain development in children, but the levels of fluoride used in these studies were much higher than the levels in NYC water.

## Action plan

**Take steps to protect your child's teeth from cavities.** Make sure your child sees their dentist every 6 months once their 1st tooth comes in.

- Talk to your child's dentist or pediatrician about applying fluoride to their tooth surfaces.
- Don't put your baby to sleep with a bottle. If your baby drinks milk at bedtime, make sure they finish it quickly before falling asleep. Drinking milk from a bottle overnight can cause tooth decay.
- Use a rice-grain sized amount of fluoride toothpaste for children 2 years and under.

[more](#) →



- For children 3 to 6 years and older, use a pea sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Avoid sugar-sweetened beverages. Drink NYC tap water to stay hydrated.

## Resources

For more information on NYC drinking water, visit [nyc.gov](https://www.nyc.gov)

If you want to know the fluoride level in your municipal water system visit: [Drinking Water Supply & Quality Report - DEP](#)

To read the American Academy of Pediatrics' Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Fluoride for Children, visit [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)

Resources from the American Dental Association:

- FAQ on Fluoridation: visit [ada.org](https://www.ada.org)
- For more information on Fluoride in water: visit [mouthhealthy.org](https://www.mouthhealthy.org)

For more information about NYSHECK visit [nyscheck.org/rxs](https://www.nyscheck.org/rxs)

