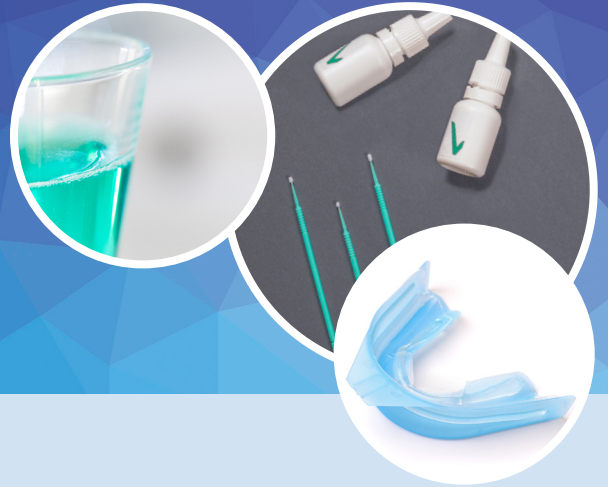




THE CANADIAN DENTAL
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES



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Fluoride Treatments: Your Questions Answered

What is fluoride?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral that can be found in both fresh and salt water, soil, and numerous foods including:



Spinach



Grapes and
raisins



Brewed black tea
and coffee



Fish (fresh or
canned), crab,
and shrimp



Food prepared
in or with
fluoridated water



Why is fluoride important?

Dental cavities are the most common and preventable disease in children and adults worldwide. They cause pain and require treatment that may cost more than people can afford. Fluoride can prevent, stop or reverse cavities. It also protects the tooth enamel from the acids produced when we eat or drink and when we don't brush and clean between our teeth regularly.

What types of fluoride do dental and dental hygiene offices use?



Varnish painted on the
teeth (most effective)



Gel or foam applied in trays
(moderately effective)



Mouth rinse
(least effective)



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Fluoride Treatments: Your Questions Answered



Do I need a fluoride treatment?

Your dental hygienist will assess your oral health and let you know if you need a fluoride treatment. A fluoride treatment may be right for you if you have:

- Poor oral hygiene
- Signs of demineralization (white spots) on your teeth
- Dry mouth or decreased saliva
- An eating disorder (e.g., anorexia, bulimia)
- Weak enamel
- Previous history of cavities

You may also benefit from a fluoride treatment if you have had head and neck radiation or if you live in a community without fluoridated drinking water.



Why is my dental hygienist recommending I have at-home fluoride?

If your dental hygienist determines that you are at a high risk for developing cavities, they may recommend daily or weekly at-home fluoride treatments. These could be in the form of a highly fluoridated toothpaste, at-home trays filled with gel or fluoride mouth rinses.



Can fluoride help with my sensitive teeth?

Yes, fluoride can help. A fluoride varnish absorbs into the tooth structure and hardens the enamel to prevent pain and sensitivity triggered by cold, sweet or sour foods.



Is a fluoride treatment recommended for children?

Yes. Children as young as 1 can have a fluoride varnish application. Fluoride varnish is the most effective and easiest way to strengthen their tooth enamel to prevent cavities.



How often should I have a fluoride treatment?

Most adults with good oral health only need a fluoride treatment once a year.

What is dental fluorosis?

Dental fluorosis is a condition that develops when children under age 8 consume too much fluoride. This excess fluoride makes white spots on their developing adult teeth. Although dental fluorosis changes the way teeth look, it does not affect the structure or health of the teeth. To avoid fluorosis, it's important to teach your children to spit out toothpaste and not swallow it.

**Fluoride treatments are a safe and effective way to keep your teeth healthy.
Talk to your dental hygienist about your fluoride needs today!**