Water Fluoridation

Ruben reports on the benefits of fluoride and the controversy behind adding fluoride to our water supplies.

TRANSCRIPT

Comments

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Ruben Meerman
This innocuous-looking glass of water has been hailed as one of the greatest health initiatives of the 20th century.

Dr Michael Foley
Everybody who has a tooth in their head will benefit from water fluoridation.

Dr Denis Ingham
It is very effective, and has been very effective in reducing tooth decay.

Journalist
These apples are being attacked by some of the best teeth in Australia.

NARRATION
Yass, in country New South Wales, was one of the first towns in Australia to fluoridate its water supply.

Journalist
It's won wide notoriety for the pioneering part it's played in fluoridation in Australia.

NARRATION
And now around 90% of us are covered. But, for decades, adding fluoride to the water was highly controversial. And in Queensland it still is.

Stephen Bennett
The amount of people with a passion for and against fluoride far outweighs anything outrageous a politician can do.

Ruben Meerman
We now have more than 50 years of research data on the subject. So what does the science say? Should we be adding fluoride to our water supplies?

NARRATION
In federated Australia, the decision to add fluoride to water is left to the States. I grew up in
Queensland, here in Bundaberg. Dr Ingham was our family dentist.

Ruben Meerman
Dr Ingham!

Dr Denis Ingham
Ruben.

Ruben Meerman
Lovely to see you.

Dr Denis Ingham
And you.

Ruben Meerman
I'm here to see if you could check out my teeth, see how all the fillings are looking after all these years.

Dr Denis Ingham
Good.

NARRATION
Up until 2007, Townsville was the only place in all of Queensland that had fluoridated water. In other States, all major population areas were covered.

Dr Denis Ingham
You've got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight fillings there.

Ruben Meerman
That's a lot.

Dr Denis Ingham
That's a lot. Maybe in a fluoridated area, if you had fluoride in the water supply, your curious experience would have been lower.

Ruben Meerman
I might have been better off, you think, if I'd been in Townsville, perhaps?

Dr Denis Ingham
Uh... yes, for sure.

NARRATION
In a 1996 study, the teeth of children in fluoridated Townsville were compared with those in unfluoridated Brisbane, and the difference was clear.

Dr Michael Foley
On average, there was about 45% less decay in the Townsville children than what there was in the Brisbane children. There was a massive difference. If somebody could reduce heart disease or cancer or something like that by 45%, they'd get a Nobel Prize for it.

Dr Michael Foley
Let's sit you back and I'll have a quick look.
NARRATION
The evidence that fluoride improves dental health extends to adults too.

Dr Michael Foley
The National Survey of Adult Oral Health was done back in 2004, 2006. Adults in fluoridated areas had significantly better teeth than adults in non-fluoridated areas.

NARRATION
So it's clear that water fluoridation works. But, how exactly? Teeth are the hardest substance in the body, primarily made up of a mineral called 'hydroxylapatite'. Fluoride, either in water or toothpaste, gets absorbed into the tooth enamel and forms a new, stronger mineral called 'fluorapatite'.

Dr Michael Foley
And that stronger mineral is then more resistant to the acid that causes tooth decay. Remember Mrs Marsh used to talk about, 'It gets in like liquid gets into this chalk'?

Mrs Marsh
It gets right into teeth, like this liquid gets into chalk.

Boy
To make teeth really tough.

Dr Michael Foley
Well, she was right. It strengthens the enamel, makes it much, much more resistant to acid. With fluoridated water, of course, you get both - you get the systemic benefit for little kiddies, and you get the much greater topical effect. You're always getting a little bit of a top-up. It's like a little fluoride treatment lots and lots of times during the day to make your teeth stronger.

NARRATION
Traditionally, the Queensland State Government has left the decision to add fluoride to local councils. This changed in 2008, when Anna Bligh's government made fluoridation mandatory across the State. But, before it could be fully implemented, the newly elected Campbell Newman government overturned the legislation, handing the decision-making power back to the councils.

Dr Michael Foley
I'm not going to criticise the government, but the decision and the legislation was not based on the health of Queenslanders - and, as a health professional, that disturbs me.

NARRATION
Citing financial concerns along with community pressure, more than a dozen councils have pulled the plug on fluoridation.

Ruben Meerman
Including my home town of Bundaberg.

Mal Forman
When I was elected as mayor, I made a commitment to the public and my people that I would not support the fluoridation of our city. I'm not convinced that's the way to go.

Stephen Bennett
We all know that there's a few consistent things that came through. But overwhelmingly they did have the issue of fluoride being seen as a poison.

**Merilyn Haines**  
This is a Schedule 6 poison. Uses - as an insecticide, particularly for roaches and ants.

**NARRATION**  
Merilyn Haines is a member of the anti-fluoride lobby.

**Merilyn Haines**  
They can use it either for killing insects or fluoridation of drinking water.

**NARRATION**  
Talking to people on the streets of my home town, it's clear the poison message has been very effective.

**Ruben Meerman**  
What's the scary thing about having it in the water, or what's your concern?

**Woman 1**  
It's chemicals.

**Woman 2**  
We don't like it.

**Man 1**  
It's just a poison.

**Woman 3**  
Fluoride's good topically for your teeth, but ingested it's actually a poison.

**Ruben Meerman**  
Ah, you're a New South Welshman.

**Man 2**  
Damn right. It's the best thing they've ever done.

**Woman 4**  
'Cause it's a poisonous chemical, so I just don't believe in it.

**NARRATION**  
But toxicologist Michael Moore strongly disagrees with the line taken by the anti-fluoride lobby.

**Professor Michael Moore**  
It's really very emotive language that's used. It goes back to one of the fundamental precepts of toxicology - the dose makes the poison. You take a lot of it, you get poisoned. If you take the right amount, it keeps you well. Have too little, you've got a problem.

**NARRATION**  
So getting the dose right with water fluoridation is critical, just as it is when you treat water with chloride. But because fluoride is perceived only as a poison, people are concerned it only has adverse health effects.
Ruben Meerman
What are these risks they claim?

Dr Michael Foley
You name the disease, they claim it. I've seen diabetes, dementia, cancer, particularly osteosarcoma, kidney disease, IQ, different tumours...

Man
Fluoride is not good for you.

Ruben Meerman
These health concerns are not new. So what is the latest science on the adverse health effects? Is there cause for concern?

NARRATION
In 2011, Harvard University researchers looked at the selected link between bone cancer and water fluoridation.

Professor Michael Moore
The Harvard study was an excellent one, trying to see whether there was any relationship between the presence of fluoride in bone next to an osteosarcoma and the development of the cancer, and they could find no association whatsoever. It was a very, very thorough review, large number of subjects, a highly credible bit of work.

NARRATION
In 2007, Australia's top research body, the National Health and Medical Research Council, released a major report on water fluoridation.

Professor Michael Moore
They reviewed 5,500 papers, and, on the basis of the papers of the highest quality, concluded that there was no association between fluoridation and illness. When you're looking at it from the position of a research scientist, it's very hard to understand the objections that people place in the presence of fluoride in water supplies. There are so many studies saying that it's safe when it's used properly.

NARRATION
But that's the problem. Local councillors usually aren't scientists, and, by their own admission, don't feel qualified to make these decisions.

Mal Forman
It's not up to us to be doing and dealing with health issues because it's not our department. And, being not a medical person or a scientist, we can only go on what people put on their labels and what people tell us, and go from there.

Dr Michael Foley
Just put a little bit of fluoride on a couple of those...

Dr Michael Foley
It's like decisions on vaccinations or speed limits or bicycle helmets or smoking. Major health decisions like that are best made at State and Federal level.
And across most of the country, that's the case - but not in Queensland.

**Ruben Meerman**
What do you think about fluoride in drinking water?

**Man**
Don't need it.

**Ruben Meerman**
Ah! You don't, do you?

Topics: [Health](#)
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Qld State MP for Burnett

Mal Forman  
Mayor Bundaberg Regional Council

**Related Info**

[Fluoride Fact Sheet, Qld Government](#)
[Queensland Government Fluoride information](#)
[NHMRC review of the efficacy and safety of fluoridation](#)
[An Assessment of Bone Fluoride and Osteosarcoma - Harvard Study](#)
Han Barkmeyer - 21 Aug 2013 2:22:56pm

Catalyst should have looked at why the industrial waste product fluoride from the aluminum and fertiliser industries were dumped in our drinking water in the first place. It would have cost them a fortune to dispose of it properly as they were not allowed to burn it, bury it or dump it in the rivers or the sea. Catalyst would have come across the Mellon Institute in the US which was hired by Alcoa, the biggest aluminum producer in the US, to come up with a cheap solution to get rid of its toxic waste, fluoride.

The scientist for hire at the Mellon Institute in the 1940’s came up with the lie that the untreated industrial waste product fluoride would be beneficial for human teeth when put in the drinking water supply. Note also that these same scientist at the Mellon Institute also claimed that asbestos and smoking was safe back in the 1940’s.

The whole pro-fluoride brigade of dentist and scientists has been “educated” on flawed outdated science, but unfortunately successful in bringing about forced fluoridation with untreated industrial grade fluoride in our drinking water. Of course they have their reputations at stake and do not want to admit their mistakes. Nor do governments dumping the poison in our drinking water. The only beneficiaries are the polluting industries who can legally dump their poisonous waste products in our drinking water supplies. Maybe only 1% of it gets consumed by humans, the rest is just polluting the environment. To them the solution to pollution is dilution.

The overall conclusion from the Catalyst program was that the latest science does not show a link between controlled water fluoridation and adverse health effects. That is not the latest science, it is the same old corrupted, outdated flawed science that is keeping our drinking water polluted with untreated industrial grade fluoride.

It is the anti-fluoride dentists, doctors and scientists who have studied the latest science on fluoride and who are up in arms but who were totally ignored by Catalyst. That’s why I and so many others who watched the Catalyst fluoride program call it ridiculous one-sided pro-fluoride propaganda. The countries still artificially fluoridating and poising their water supplies are in a shrinking minority as the rest of the world are waking up to the dangers of fluoridated water. The internet is far more useful to get a balanced view of water fluoridation and one would quickly come across Dr Paul Connett, professor of chemistry and toxicology for instance.

To me and so many others, Catalyst was clearly in breach of the ABC’s code of practice. A judge in a court of law would take a dim view of Catalyst’s protestsations of presenting a balanced view of its fluoride program. Shame on Catalyst and the ABC, I hope the ABC, as it has lost its purpose, gets privatised so I don’t have to pay my 8 plus cents a day anymore.
Given the amount of links that we now receive in many of our posts, it takes us time and resources to check each link to make sure that it falls within our editorial guidelines. These guidelines include no advertising, no offensive language, no overtly personal attacks and a range of other criteria. After reviewing the comments we have recently received, we will continue to publish external links on the basis that the ABC does not endorse any of the information that is contained in external links.

The decision to publish or not publish a given post, or to edit a post, is based on our editorial policy guidelines, regardless of the pro or anti nature of the post. However, comments which are overtly personal or hurtful, or which contain offensive language, references to advertising or are off topic from the actual content of the Catalyst story will not published.

>> Reply
Ross D. Hopkins - 16 Aug 2013 4:18:09pm

I think the important thing to remember here... is that it's not Sodium Fluoride that's going into public drinking water but an illegal industrial waste, from industry!!!

>> Reply
Tim - 16 Aug 2013 1:47:42pm

Thanks Catalyst.
I'm 54 years old, have drunk fluoridated water all my life. My teeth are in great condition, my IQ tests reveal I am of above average intelligence and my general health has been excellent all my life. If water fluoridation was a danger to my health I gave it every chance to be so. However, it seems to have only been a benefit.
When I look outside my personal experience I see when fluoride is added to water supplies in the right dosage, the incidence of tooth decay decreases dramatically. I've yet to learn from any credible source, of any epidemic of fluoride-related disease.

>> Reply
JB - 15 Aug 2013 12:53:05pm

Can I suggest that the Cataylst team add links to the 50 years of research data you hint at. Yes a big task but it's the only way to show the consistency of the findings to back up your claims. Factsheets from government authorities are no longer considered reliable in the eyes of the public (yes scary).

So please demonstrate to the doubters just how much research has been done to back up your story. The comments below show that the message hasn't hit the mark and just how deep that that mistrust runs.

We're living in an age where many believe that everything is a conspiracy theory. We need to understand the process of why this is occurring, why people are believing such poor quality information and unproven theories. Why people are publishing information that's deliberately written emotively to play on people's fears of the unknown.

Welcome to the age of information anxiety (and online mob mentality).

>> Reply
Damon - 15 Aug 2013 1:36:27am
I was interested to hear about fluorapatite, as I'd never heard about it before.

Apparently according to this though, fluorapatite's effects may be nonexistent:

Fluoride also improves people's teeth however, because it kills bacteria in the mouth...
So does chlorine, and cyanide.
Maybe we could trial some low-dose cyanide toothpaste and add it to drinking water to test out the effects?
There might be some similar correlational research results from that also? ;OP

I'm sticking with my xylitol toothpaste and reverse osmosis filter for the time being.

>> Reply
Moderator: Dear viewers,
Thank you for your comments. Please note we will no longer be publishing links to external web sites and the moderator will remove external links from future posts.

ABC (Moderator) - 14 Aug 2013 9:29:21am

Dear viewers,
thank you for your posts and apologies for the delay in publishing them. We had technical problems with our website on Friday which has led to a backlog of posts.Our moderator is working through them as quickly as possible.

>> Reply
Shelley - 12 Aug 2013 9:30:13pm

Fluoride is a Band-Aid solution for poor dietary choices. Tooth decay can be prevented through adequate oral hygiene and a reduction in the carbohydrate - in particular, sucrose (Toxic Sugar?) - content of the diet (See "Dental caries is a preventable infectious disease" in the Australian Dental Journal 2000 and the WHO publication "Fluoride" for more information).
People have a right to choose what they consume. You wouldn't introduce statins to the drinking water supply to reduce the prevalence of heart attacks, so why fluoride?

>> Reply
Ross D. Hopkins - 12 Aug 2013 8:59:34pm

Poor research Catalyst, shame on you!!! Here's some link's, to help you do your job properly next time!!!

1. http://www.fluorideresearch.org

>> Reply
skejbe - 12 Aug 2013 4:23:22pm
if fluoride is so good then WHY does the dentist put a special coating on everyone's teeth to protect the teeth from the damage the fluoride does to them. TOXIC INDUSTRIAL waste product is being dumped on everyone. SHAME SHAME SHAME

> Reply

- **Claire - 13 Aug 2013 9:53:38pm**
  I'm not sure what you're referring to. Dentists don't put a "special coating" on teeth to protect teeth from fluoride. Dentists regularly apply 9000ppm or 22,600ppm fluoride prophylactic gels to teeth to promote fluorapatite formation.

- **Ailsa Boyden - 14 Aug 2013 7:19:10pm**
  Yes, enough fluoride poison to send the child home with a stomach ache and most parents are too naïve about how poisonous fluoride is to relate it to the child possibly having swallowed some of this 9,000 parts per million to 26,000 ppm fluoride.

-- Reply

**Aaron Rench - 12 Aug 2013 12:24:46pm**

Wow! Great comments! What I love about this day and age is that in general the population don't just accept what is pushed on them by the scientists and governments. Even if fluoride were beneficial to our teeth, I too think it's appalling that fluoride (not the naturally occurring substance - the by product of industry) is added to our water supply. This is often done without the consent of consumers. Hey!? Why don't we throw all sorts of medications/supplements into our drinking water in the name of assisting the poor, dumb population with its health? Because these things aren't an environmental toxin that can't be legally dumped anywhere else - that's why. Funny thing is - it's being dumped into the environment anyway. People, think about the percentage of water that is actually drunk: it's got to be less than 1%. The rest is used to wash, bathe & water gardens. These activities place the toxic waste product into the environment anyway. I agree with Jay Mark about it being an unregulated dose - it all depends on how much water one drinks! How can this be allowed?!

-- Reply

- **Omega - 12 Aug 2013 7:28:24pm**
  1. Fluoride exposure disrupts the synthesis of collagen and leads to the breakdown of collagen in bone, tendon, muscle, skin, cartilage, lungs, kidney and trachea.

  2. Fluoride stimulates granule formation and oxygen consumption in white blood cells, but inhibits these processes when the white blood cell is challenged by a foreign agent in the blood.

  3. Fluoride depletes the energy reserves and the ability of white blood cells to properly destroy foreign agents by the process of phagocytosis. As little as 0.2 ppm fluoride stimulates superoxide production in resting white blood cells, virtually abolishing phagocytosis. Even micro-molar amounts of fluoride, below 1 ppm, may seriously depress the ability of white blood cells to destroy pathogenic agents.
4. Fluoride confuses the immune system and causes it to attack the body's own tissues, and increases the tumor growth rate in cancer.

6. Fluoride depresses thyroid activity-prone individuals.

Fluorides have been used to modify behavior and mood of human beings.

It is a little known fact that fluoride compounds were added to the drinking water of prisoners to keep them docile and inhibit questioning of authority, both in Nazi prison camps in World War II and in the Soviet gulags in Siberia.

Lyn Smith - 11 Aug 2013 8:56:55pm

I fail to understand how the anti-lobby can be absolutely certain they KNOW that fluoride causes all the effects they ascribe to it. What authority told them it causes all those problems? How good was the authority’s evidence? What is this authoritative evidence that says it is so bad? Or is it a whole grab-bag of fears and prejudices?

Dan Germouse - 12 Aug 2013 6:53:48pm

Lyn, I have never claimed to be absolutely certain I know that fluoride causes all of the adverse health effects it has been linked to, and neither have many other science-educated opponents of forced fluoridation. It should be obvious firstly that the fluoridation experiment is unethical and nonsensical, and secondly that the burden of proof for safety and efficacy lies with the proponents. There have not been any good quality studies which indicate that fluoridation is anything but dangerous and useless. The better quality studies almost invariably call the practice into question, but are not sufficient to accurately gauge the extent of harm which is being done. Robert Kehoe's "show me the data" mentality is not good enough.

Rene Erhardt - 13 Aug 2013 6:55:19am

Since you are asking about sources of information, that's not a problem. The easiest to access is the website: fluoridationqueensland.org/blog/ where you can find dozens of reports including the study done by the DPI in Queensland as well as links to other research carried out worldwide. A fairly new book to the subject has been published by Paul Connett, the case against fluoride where he teamed up with other scientists looking into all the published research in this matter and if you are interested in how and why the Americans came up with this outrageous practise have a look at the book by Christopher Bryson, the fluoride deception.

Ailsa Boyden - 14 Aug 2013 7:20:49pm

Lyn, Instead of attacking the messenger, how about some facts to support your stance?
Lyn Smith - 11 Aug 2013 8:44:35pm

I think Catalyst should look at the question of the process why people choose not to believe the authorities. How do people pick and choose what authority to believe. It must hark back to our education system. Somehow we are not taught to think rationally. Are the people in the big cities less rational than the country people? I don't think so.

>> Reply

Sandy Sanderson - 15 Aug 2013 9:29:17am

Well said! Right on the mark! Do we have a brain to research and think for ourselves? Or do we just 'believe' what an official tells us we should believe. The evidence is clear if you bother to look. Some of those paid 'authorities' have vested interests to maintain a lie. It is the reality of the world we live in. Just look at the litigation now against drug companies who make it a habit of covering up negative results to get their drugs passed. They have made it a fine art and the community pays big time.

>> Reply

Anne Stuckey - 11 Aug 2013 5:57:32pm

Concise presentation. With regard to research - can we have more background, ie all the dentists have left the city in Qld that has fluorid; actual risk compared to relative risk, the study sample? Why is dentistry now being included in Medicare? In America, fluoride was added to water for the native Indians. Over 80 years later, no difference. Can you please address fluoride as a halogen and what it does to iodine/thyroid. Many Thanks for your informative presentation. Anne.

>> Reply

Linda - 11 Aug 2013 5:32:59pm

After watching your very Pro-Fluoride show, I feel I need to add to the conversations by saying that not everyone has benefited from the addition of this processed by-product of industry (even natural fluoride can cause many problems).

Shortly after fluoride was added to the Townsville water supply, I ended up with Asthma (I am the only one in my family to have it, so it wasn't inherited). I also have a mouth full of fillings, even though I religiously cleaned my teeth every day as we were told to by dentists.

I have also had many problems because I am hypothyroid (low thyroid).

After I married I moved away from Townsville.

Shortly after they put fluoride into the water where I now live, I developed a very painful condition that affects my muscles.

Most pro-fluoride supporters would say it's co-incidence. If that is the case, why do I feel much better drinking non-fluoridated water and have severe pain when I drink fluoridated water...

>> Reply

• delldarrach - 16 Aug 2013 4:33:22pm

in reply to this one I can attest he same .I suffered excruciating stomach pains, existed on buscopan and gastro stop and eventually got relief when changing to tank and filtered water .Yesterday I saw a new doctor who was aghast to think that I hadn't had a blood test for 2 years and sent me straight off to the medical laboratory for testing as I was on
medication for thyroid and shouldn't be drinking fluoridated water. Tests will be back next week. To see if any damage has been done in that area. Anyone who says fluoride isn't dangerous is dangerous. Not everyone is the same.

>> Reply

Bernie Hunt - 11 Aug 2013 12:08:18pm

Catalyst, this subject needs to be taken further. In nature things are supplied in balance, each mineral balanced by its opposite. Adding fluoride to drinking water does not do this nor does it regulate the doses consumers get. Genuine sea salt contains all minerals and trace elements with their opposites and this is a preferable way to get fluoride.

While it is evident fluoride can improve teeth, unfortunately fluoride supplants or replaces iodine the presence of which is vital to our health and immune systems. As it becomes depleted, the deficiency of iodine can lead to breast cancer in women and prostate cancer in men and impact on many other health issues as well as intelligence.

Chemical fertilisers were for many years seen as a major improvement in farming however prolonged and greater use have caused many problems on farms, health of crops and livestock and unfortunately, those of us who consume farm produce. Gradually its use is being questioned and other ways of farming are being developed. Catalyst's further investigation may help lead to questioning of the ADVERSE impacts of use of fluoride and in particular its impact on iodine and our health. Please!!!

>> Reply


I was very disappointed by the very bias report on fluoride by catalyst reporter Ruben Meerman. It's a shame because I believed like a lot of the viewers who also aired their disappointment that catalyst was a scientific programme and it would leave no stone unturned to give its viewers the facts and let them make up their minds.

It's a real shame when so called experts like Professor Michael Moore gives out opinion which I believe to be dangerous. He admitted that fluoride was a poison that had to be administered with caution but at the same time he recommended it's use systematically for children and indeed infants when there were the ones who are in fact most vulnerable as their brains and bodies are still developing.

If you look at any toothpaste with fluoride- it carries a caution on the tube. Firstly it stresses that only a pea size amount is needed and that if excessive amounts are taken to contact the toxicology depart ASAP. And yet we are happy to swallow one pea size amount each time we drink a glass of water. And if you follows the guide lines to healthy amount of water per day that would be 8 glasses! Babies whose parent cannot afford to by bottle water are feeding their children toxic amounts of fluoride everyday via formulas.

There are expert out there who can explain scientifically why we should avoid fluoride systematically. Why didn't Catalyst do it due diligence and interview them? Instead of making it look like the ant-fluoride supporters were a bung of hippies who had no scientific basic for their augment.

This subject has to be reviewed again and this time do it properly or you risk losing your credibility.
Im a dentist, and very much pro-fluoride. the 1st thing i say to all my patients which are anti-fluoride, is that all the studies which show it has adverse affects are based on very high concentrations which are never received in the real world. many countries in the world which do not add fluoride in the water already have it naturally and is not needed. to those that don't want it, great, because it means the dentist can be richer. Also as i always say to my patients, too much of anything is very bad for you, if you eat too much meat in one sitting = meat poisoning, too much water = water poisoning or if you eat a whole tube of toothpaste you can die without medical treatment. i think most people read the worst studies and are scared into not thinking it is OK. NSW has benefited so greatly from this from the 50-60s. Not only does it prevent tooth decay, it saves people money going to the dentist meaning they can spend money in the economy else where. also the physiological effect always going to the dentist with problems can affect people. people seem to have lower IQs without fluoride than with it.

Good on you Matthew for speaking out on this important issue. I'm pleased I live in NSW where public health authorities decide on public health matters e.g. childhood vaccinations, notification of infectious diseases etc. Rather than leaving it to politicians. I really don't get the Qld culture as the state who want to see themselves as different to the rest of Australia. I see it as backward and a left over from the Bjeke-peterson era and his simplistic view of the world. Sadly, Campbell Newman appears to be out of the same mould.

Matthew. There are many states in America now that warn parents not to give their babies boiled water because when water is boiled the fluoride is concentrated and is therefore toxic to the infant. But a baby under one has to have boiled water. So what is a parent to do? wouldn't it make sense for each of us to make our own choices and add it to our own water if we so choose. My mother is diabetic. At times she drinks more than others. How do I know that she is not getting to much and others who drink less will not get enough. How is it that all other medicines doses are taken so seriously by the medical profession when prescribed for different ages. I have a thyroid problem. A common problem in today's world. It is not rare but fluoride is know to aggravate it. Why should I be paying thousands to get a reverse osmosis to get it out. Its cheaper to just buy fluoride tablets to put it in! By the way. As a child my mother used to beg me to brush my teeth. I hated the taste of conventional toothpaste and I always did. So about 20 years ago I found a brand that was not minty and fluoride free by chance. Nothing wrong with my teeth. They are white and I get compliments. I have two little fillings which are probably because I hate crap as a teenager and never brushed or flossed. I would go for days without brushing because I hated the minty taste! Eeeck I think how gross now but fluoride made no difference to my teeth

matthew, the dentist, why is it that countries still fluoridating their drinking water supplies are in a tiny shrinking minority? Do yourself and your patients a favour and read up on the latest studies on fluoridation.
Derek Rucki - 10 Aug 2013 9:10:38pm

ABC Catalyst,
Your biased program on water fluoridation disturbs me, but it does NOT surprise me. You have sold out, or perhaps were unfortunately fooled by the dwindling number of the so called "health professionals" spinning water fluoridation as a supposed silver-bullet type effective health measure without providing balanced reporting as adopted by over 96% of the world supported by numerous peer reviewed research questioning the water fluoridation experiment. Shame... Real shame! Your reporting is definitely NOT unbiased.

>> Reply

Frederik - 10 Aug 2013 8:31:12pm

I cannot believe the amount of negativity and frankly, stupidity rearing its ugly head in these comments. "Where was that evidence sourced from?" The truth is that all of the HIGHEST evidence research, (sourced from cochrane and literature reviews) show that there is only one story. Fluoride at the right dosage in drinking water has an overwhelmingly positive effect preventing the decay of our teeth. If you want to argue ethics then take ONLY the ethical argument to your government. Do not argue the science. Leave that to people who are actually experts in medicine, dentistry and research.
"...it was free air time for greedy dentists." - the use of fluoride in water PREVENTS the decay that dentists treat. Therefore DECREASING the amount of money they would earn.

>> Reply

Matt - 10 Aug 2013 7:31:32pm

Great story, although more could have been made of the over-whelming evidence of effectiveness in reducing tooth decay (including the numerous systematic reviews supporting fluoridation), and the complete lack of rigorous scientific evidence of harmful effects.

Even at the simplest level, Queensland has been unfluoridated until 2008, and compared to the rest of the country, there is no evidence of increased rates of cancers, bone disease, kidney disease etc in other states compared to Queensland.

And a final note - fluoride occurs naturally in the water supply - since it is a naturally occurring element in the soil. So even if there was no artificial fluoridation, all the people asking for 'pure' water would still consume fluoride.

>> Reply

Jean Terry - 10 Aug 2013 5:42:36pm

A disappointingly biased review of fluoridation in the water supply. It seems that Catalyst is another program that has no credibility. Why does most of Europe ban fluoridation? My doctor told me not to drink tap water because of the fluoridation.

>> Reply

Ross D. Hopkins - 10 Aug 2013 4:27:23pm

Catalyst... show us the science to back your biased story on fluoride. You did not mention the overwhelming, overseas scientific studies, that dispute your claims in defence of fluoride. After all it
is only slightly less toxic than Arsenic & a little more toxic than lead. Maybe we should be putting these in the water to remove unwanted parasites. Oh that's right, we all ready are, it comes included with the neuro-toxic soup called fluorosilicic acid which is the cheaper substitute for Sodium Fluoride that is going into public water supplies.

>> Reply
Shane Woods - 10 Aug 2013 1:50:40pm

After watching this little propaganda piece I wondered just what the 'perk' was that Ruben Meerman was given. firstly, there have been NO long term studies anywhere that states that ingesting fluoride is good for you or your teeth. secondly the same medical profession, the same 'scientists' and the same media outlets were telling the public that DDT, Cigarettes and Asbestos (to name a few) were good for you. thirdly (as an aside) the medical, dental and pharmaceutical industries make their money from 'sick' people. so do you really think that these industries really WANT a healthy population? Why no mention of where the 'fluoride' comes from? Why no mention that a large percentage of European countries do NOT fluoridate their water and have equal to or LESS dental problems than countries like Australia, Great Britain or the U.S. and finally, why no mention that the "NHMRC review of the efficacy and safety of fluoridation" was generated by the Dental Department of the Adelaide University which obtained almost 100% of its' funding from Colgate? wouldn't that little gem highlight just how biased, not only the story was but also the report in general?

>> Reply
Moderator: Dear viewer,
Ruben Meerman has no links to any companies or organisations promoting the use of fluoride.

• Sandy Sanderson - 15 Aug 2013 9:33:51am
Yes, but does Ruben have a vested interest in preserving the status quo so as not to lose face from having supported a fallacy? No different to the 'resistance' in admitting that smoking was bad for health or that lead should come out of petrol because NO lead is the best... Not even a "small amount of the poison." This is what the Europeans have decided by disbanding with fluoridation. Our 'authorities' here in Australia are still in the dark ages of a 60's mentality. Move on.

>> Reply

David Smith - 10 Aug 2013 1:50:12pm

I am a chemist and I have been working in the water industry for 20 years. Some of my colleagues and I have looked into this fluoride issue in the past. We couldn't find much evidence of harm from the doses of fluoride we use in the industry but on the other hand we found the evidence of benefit was not that great either. The problem seems to be that fluoride won't work where there is plaque. If your teeth are well cleaned it does work well but if you clean and floss your teeth regularly with a fluoride toothpaste, you probably don't need fluoride in the water. If your teeth are dirty, the fluoride won't help you. Flossing and topical application with toothpaste is an alternative to ingestion via the water supply. The work of the American scientist M.J. Hicks shows that the efficacy of fluoride is hampered by plaque.
I still think there is some benefit in water fluoridation but if a given community does not want it, then that's their choice.

>> Reply
roger wibbly - 10 Aug 2013 12:23:25pm

lol science.
not science.
opinionated bias :)

>> Reply
Clint O'Meley - 10 Aug 2013 11:55:25am

I have to agree with most of the comments shown here. This was a very biased piece. Given the economic burden that mental illnesses such as depression place on the economy (http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/2012/february/manicavasagar/), perhaps we should add Prozac to the tap water too. As an added bonus, Prozac contains fluoride. Then everyone can have sunny dispositions and shiny white smiles.
Fluoridation has and always will be a Band-Aid solution for poor dietary choices. Perhaps Catalyst should have Googled streptococcus mutans and its relationship with sucrose and dental caries before producing this piece. Then they could have shown that dental caries are not caused by a fluoride deficiency any more than depression is caused by a Prozac deficiency.

>> Reply
Jess - 10 Aug 2013 11:55:14am

This is ridiculous. Such a contentious issue needs to be presented from multiple viewpoints in order to be any use to anybody.

You had people offering to present the case against fluoride for this episode yet you ignored them.

If someone considers fluoride to be beneficial for their health they have access to it through cleaner, safer products such as toothpaste or fluoride tablets.

I think it is reasonable to expect a country like Australia to provide residents with clean, safe drinking water. Adding "fluoride" to the water supply in the form of a toxic waste product and then brushing off the concerns of people who question whether that is a good idea is disgusting.

>> Reply
Ailsa Boyden - 10 Aug 2013 11:37:17am

Your bias for fluoridation is revealed again by the four links below the program's transcript which are all to pro-fluoridation information.

You were pre-warned that Dr Foley would be likely to make his 45% difference/benefit claim for fluoridated Townsville when compared with a non-fluoridated Brisbane (1996). He did. But neither you nor Dr Foley reported that the 45% 'benefit'/difference amounted to about an average difference of 0.23 of one tooth surface out of a mouth full of teeth surfaces in children aged from 5 to 12 years.

Having been pre-warned, it would have been possible for the show's host to cut in - after Dr Foley mentioned the 45% - and add something about what the 45% related to â€“ such as a clinically insignificant difference and that the effects of fluoride are now known to be largely topical (on the teeth) and not systemic.

You could have told viewers that they should weigh for themselves whether they were prepared to drink â€” from the cradle to the grave â€” an industrial-grade cocktail of ëœfluorideë€ with
heavy metals and metalloids in it; some of which are carcinogens and many of which are cumulative â€“ on the off chance that it might save about one tooth surface, per person.

You could have put the link, which was given to you, to the Hamilton City Councilâ€™s 4-day Fluoridation Tribunal Hearings along with your 4 pro-fluoridation links so that your listeners could judge for themselves the calibre of the information disseminated by both side of the fluoridation divide; or the link to Dr Anna Goodwinâ€™s 11.32-minute video in which she, a medical oncologist, speaks out against fluoridation.

Shame. Shame. Shame. Please refund my 8 (?) cents per day, thank you very much.

> Reply
Diane Drayton Buckland - 10 Aug 2013 10:50:15am

Now let's tell this disgrace as it is:-

Informed & aware people so sick of the corporate whores Mainstream Media who wouldn't tell the truth about water fluoridation/pollution if their lives depended on it - well actually it does - the dangerously corrosive hazardous waste pollutants S6/S7 Corrosive 8 poisons and co-contaminants (known as water fluoridation) does cumulative harm to our health, our petsâ€™ health & our environment.

The slick users of propaganda from the Fluoridation Cartel wouldn't know truth and integrity if it hit them between the eyes - these hazardous waste pollutants fluorsilicic acid/silicofluorides & co-contaminants are in the water supplies, hence contaminating our food chain and we have to bathe in it - it is the hazardous waste from phosphate fertilizer industries S6/S7 Corrosive 8 poisons. The 'fluoride' in toothpastes is S5 poison, (which S5 poison labels were deviously removed by Australian Government) so let these Fluoride Fanatics buy their own fluoridated toothpastes, fluoride treatments etc., & do not allow them to have the political power & control to dump these hazardous waste pollutants into our water supplies known as water fluoridation (hence contaminating our entire food chain also.)

Australia wide in dental crisis after widespread fluoridation Australia wide for decades first commencing Beaconsfield Tasmania in 1953 and USA also in dental crisis after up to 67 years of water fluoridation/pollution first commencing Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1945 (also in dental crisis). Itâ€™s a no-brainer - dangerously corrosive hazardous waste pollutants & co-contaminants have no place being dumped in the peoplesâ€™ water supplies & hence also contaminating entire food chain. All State Gov's. & Federal Gov. (& Councils) must cease water fluoridation (pollution) immediately & irrevocably.

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE IN SOCIETY Science Society Sustainability
NO TO FLUORIDATION- DENTAL DISEASE INCREASES 6FOLD BY FLUORIDATION
http://www.i-sis.org.uk/NotoFluoridation.php

The only answer EVER was to provide access to affordable dental health care services for all the population, not the disposal of hazardous waste pollutants and co-contaminants of lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, etc. from phosphate fertiliser industries (known as water fluoridation, plus also added is aluminium sulphate) into our drinking water supplies & hence also contaminating our food chain & using the populations' kidneys as hazardous waste disposal/filtration units.

> Reply
Georgia Walsh - 10 Aug 2013 9:23:19am
Numerous reviews have not found any correlation between any negative effects and water fluoridation - there is no sufficient evidence. However, the benefits to dental health by preventing cavities have been well documented. As pointed out in this article, what anti-fluoridation activists fail to realise that there is a difference between dose and toxicity. Anything can be a poison when given at a high enough dosage. The fluoride that is added to the water is kept with a maximum concentration of 1.5 mg/L which mirrors guidelines recommended by the World Health Organisation. There is so much public misinformation. This was a good article by catalyst.

>> Reply

- **No to fluoride - 14 Aug 2013 9:49:49pm**

  George, please study outside the box. Don't just listen to what you have been told or what you may have been trained. Just for a moment go and do a slight amount of study on the dangers of fluoride exposure. You as well as your family are overexposed to this fluoride toxin. Have a look at each and every HEAVY METAL AND TOXIC chemical that makes up the actual fluoride that is put into your drinking water and added to each and every food you eat that is manufactured or grown using town water and uses unfiltered fluoride water. I sadly thought as you did most of my life that fluoride was good for my teeth until I started asking health questions as to why I have a filling in just about every one of my teeth. I lived with fluoride in my water and many dental visits including many fluoride treatments all costing me around $20,000.00 + to date and now having my teeth progressively removed. Now suffering gum disease and more recently diagnosed with hypothyroid disease. Fluoride was medically used to lower Hyperthyroid problems. What now happens to those suffering with Hypothyroid problems? Does fluoride now lower our failing thyroid ever more and adding more stress to our health. Well that question really hits my buttons. Hmmmm. I believed as we all were influenced by media that fluoride was good for your teeth. My body as yours is made up of more than just teeth, we have many essential and sensitive soft tissue organs. Well fluoride has done me no good at all.

  My now adult children were raised WITHOUT fluoride and have great no filling adult teeth.

  There is so much factual research available to you and those who really wish to do the research.

  I ask you, how much fluoride did you and your family consume today?

  I noted our local supermarkets spray our fruits and vegetables daily with unfiltered fluoride water. How much fluoride has that now added to our/your already fluoride drenched food supply. It's up to you to look after your own health. So please give credit to those who HAVE taken the time and studied the REAL chemical exposure of fluoride including the many negative health affects to both human, animal and our environment.

  I give thanks to those Qld towns standing up and saying NO TO FLUORIDE as is most of Australians that are aware of the dangers. Smart people. We need a fluoride free AUSTRALIA. If you want fluoride ask your council to supply it free to you via some other form or ask your doctor to prescribe fluoride. That won't happen as Doctors have nothing to do with teeth. Keep learning people. Turn off your TV and research this very important fluoride debate.

  In response to the ABC - Catalyst reporting being biased or not, I am pleased to see such a well informed community voicing concerns on such an extremely important issue that affects us all.
Ozzy - 10 Aug 2013 9:10:23am

How about you guys just filter your water and buy your bottled water? You obviously have no idea about basic chemistry and reading good quality evidence based literature. If you don't understand then by all means go and filter your water or buy bottled water, but don't go making false claims and scaremonger everybody else out of a community health project that benefits people less fortunate than you.

>> Reply

aleksandra - 10 Aug 2013 5:45:15am

Some may claim ADD medication would be great in our drinking water, as a preventive to hyperactive children and help everyone be more productive. (Hey, it has some proven benefits!!) Perhaps we should have a nice steady stream of Ibuprofen in case something hurts. And those that don't like it, well it should be their obligation at their own cost to remove it from the public drinking water. I'm not even an activist of any kind, but it's common sense. This story missed the point entirely, and was unquestionably, intentionally biased, in quite a shameful way. It reminds me of some propaganda films I've seen from the Soviet era. The reporting is laughable!

>> Reply

jane V - 10 Aug 2013 12:20:52am

I was absolutely disgusted and as a Queenslander very offended by the condescending, biased and inaccurate story on Catalyst about "alleged" benefits of fluoride in water. They sink lower and lower every week as they sell out to big pharma. My son was vaccine damaged by MMR vaccine and is very disabled as a result. I have looked after his teeth for the past 21 years and he has never had a cavity. When they put fluoride in our water three years ago he started to get fluoride spots on his beautiful white teeth even although we use fluoride free toothpaste. Harvard studies have shown that in China children drinking fluoride in the water have a lower IQs than those who don't. Looking up this topic in Wikipedia you can see that Australia is in the minority because many countries do not have or have take fluoride out of the water. A close family member is a water quality chemist and he said no self respecting water scientist thinks fluoride should be put in the water and the little benefit there could be outweighs the risks to the body. This family member assigned 2 PHD chemists to research the benefits and risks of fluoride in the water. They based their work on the York Report (York University) and checked all references mentioned in that report. Their significant findings were:

- That fluoride acted on the tooth enamel topically. It could not reach enamel through the circulatory system.
- The reaction kinetics was fast. Fluoride does not need an extended period of time to react with enamel.
- The presence of plaque prevents fluoride reacting with enamel.
- Teeth need to be brushed and flossed for fluoride to have the required efficacy.
- Most toothpaste has high fluoride concentrations that can act rapidly with enamel at the most opportune time (when the enamel is clean).
- Regular brushing and flossing with fluoride toothpaste is more beneficial than obtaining fluoride from drinking water and there is no need to ingest the fluoride where it can react with other parts of the body (e.g. bones).
· Dental fluoresces (white spots on teeth) cannot be regarded as a purely cosmetic side effect of drinking fluoride dosed water.
· There was no real evidence of significant harm from fluoride but the benefits were considerably overstated.
· The quality of research quoted by both sides of the debate was often found to contain significant bias. Surveys especially were found to be problematic.

As a water scientist this family member said the effect of fluoride were a matter of chemistry not dentistry and overall the benefits are too small to justify the trouble of handling and dosing the concentrated dangerous chemical at water plants.

This story on catalyst is part of the ABC's daily attempt to introduce big pharma propaganda at every opportunity. I have complained many times to ABC about their constant inclusion of big pharma propagand

>> Reply
Julie Vincent - 09 Aug 2013 11:01:22pm

I just want to add my own personal experience to the fluoride debate. Since arriving in Adelaide from UK 20 years ago I have been subjected to fluoride in the town drinking water. Five years ago I suffered from hypothyroid disease. I was advised that fluoride displaces iodine in the body which the Thyroid gland needs to survive. I purchased a reverse osmosis water filter and now happy to say I have reversed my thyroid condition and no longer require medication. Coincidence? .... I don't think so!

>> Reply
Dominic Berry - 09 Aug 2013 10:33:45pm

This report is absolutely disgracefully biased. It is a string of false or misleading statements that are presented without criticism. Probably the most outrageous claim is that the National Survey of Adult Oral Health showed that adults in fluoridated areas had significantly better teeth. If you look at the actual report, what you find is that there was no detectable difference between unfluoridated Queensland and the rest of Australia.

The comparison between Townsville and Brisbane is almost as bad. That difference of 45% is less than one filling. Fluoridation promoters always pick data for very young children who have less than one filling on average so they can claim a huge percentage for a tiny difference. Moreover, cherry picking cities to compare shows nothing. If you have data for a lot of cities you can always pick a pair to claim anything you want. This is a standard tactic used by fluoridation promoters; Dr John Colquhoun blew the whistle on this more than 15 years ago. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8th-Bbb0LQ

It is also claimed that fluoride has a systemic effect. This is completely wrong. It has been known since 2000 that fluoride has no systemic effect. This fact on its own should have been sufficient to end fluoridation worldwide. It makes no sense whatsoever to drink it.

The 2007 NHMRC review is being misrepresented. In the first place the review found that water fluoridation has a known adverse effect (dental fluorosis). For most other adverse effects it did not state that there was no association, it stated that there was insufficient evidence. Furthermore this review was blatantly inadequate. If you actually read it, it does not examine 5500 papers, it gives a long series of excuses to only examine a tiny fraction of the literature that is why they didn’t find sufficient evidence. To give just one example of a study they
omitted, the largest animal study on cancer found that fluoride is carcinogenic.

Releasing reviews that cherry pick studies is another standard tactic by fluoridation promoters. The most thorough review on fluoride toxicity is that by the NRC in 2006 (which was not mentioned in this report). In the NRC review there were more than 100 pages examining the effect of fluoride on the endocrine system. In the NHMRC review there was less than one page!

Another outrageous claim is that there are so many studies saying that it's safe. Good journalism would be to ask him where these studies actually are. For example, where are the studies showing that fluoridation does not adversely affect intelligence?

Well the answer is NONE, not one single study. Instead of providing evidence, promoters instead refuse to do safety testing, find excuses to ignore studies indicating harm, then claim that there are hundreds of studies proving safety - and hope that nobody actually checks.

>> Reply
Sonja Hardy - 09 Aug 2013 8:38:24pm

Anyone who still believes fluoridation is safe and effective should look up the video, "Professional Perspectives on Water Fluoridation," which features scientists and dentists who give very good reasons for denouncing this practice.

Also read the dubious history of fluoridation in investigative journalist, Christopher Bryson's brilliant exposé, "The Fluoride Deception." This book took almost 10 years of research, using Freedom of Information Legislation, and is a fascinating read.

>> Reply
Simon - 09 Aug 2013 8:26:20pm

I have to agree that this was a poorly researched presentation on Fluoride, full of anecdote.

i) There is no evidence, that I am aware of, that shows an effect of fluoride in water supplies that HAS controlled for changes in socio-economic status. Can ANYONE out there point me to such a well controlled study.

ii) Topical fluoride is effective but it is already in toothpaste.

iii) Long term effects of Fluoride supplementation is unknown. Appears to increase fractures in elderly women when given as supplement. We don't know what a lifetime consumption does.

Apart from those 3 facts very little else is known. everything else is speculative at best.

Medical Practitioner

>> Reply
Sonja Hardy - 09 Aug 2013 8:22:42pm

You really have outdone yourself in biased journalism, Catalyst. Fluoridation is something I have researched thoroughly in the last 8 years, on both sides of the argument - something we certainly can't accuse you of. You have simply accepted the endorsements of two known fluoride promoters without question, and without any attempt at investigative journalism.

Had you done your job properly, you would have found there is significant evidence fluoridation is neither safe nor effective. Just looking at Tasmania's oral health statistics should ring alarm bells.
They were the first state to fluoridate, yet have the worst dental health in the country.

You have done your viewers a grave injustice, and have utterly destroyed your credibility in this propaganda piece.

Daniel Zalec - 09 Aug 2013 8:15:40pm

It's pretty sad when the Director of the Brisbane Dental Hospital is out of touch with the scientific literature. Peer-reviewed dental research now acknowledges that the "systemic theory" is outdated (Thylstrup 1990; Zero et al. 1992; Rölla and Ekstrand 1996; Limeback 1999; Featherstone 1999; Clarkson and McLoughlin 2000; CDC 2001; Fejerskov 2004; Hellwig & Lennon 2004; NRC 2006; Pizzo et al. 2007; Cheng et al. 2007; Warren et al. 2009 â€” just to list a few). Hence, if you want fluoride on your teeth, get a toothbrush and some mouthwash, and leave the rest of us out of it. However, if you truly "believe" that swallowing fluoride is good for you, go down to the pharmacy and sort yourself out (again, leave the rest of us to make our own health decisions).

Katie - 09 Aug 2013 8:08:58pm

I can't believe how many of the comments claim this report was biased. Do people really think that the information in the 5,500 scientific papers reviewed by the NHMRC have been misreported? The WHO classifies water fluoride as one of the greatest health achievements of last century because it has reduced so much tooth decay. This program reported the scientific facts, it was not biased in any way.

To those of you still claiming that fluoride is a poison, it is such a poor argument. Water is also a poison if consumed in high enough doses. Water in Australia is fluoridated to 1ppm and since the toxic dose of fluoride is 5mg/kg, you would need to drink 5L of water for every kg you weigh to suffer from fluoride toxicity. Indeed the water would kill you first. Please develops some critical thinking skills because these kinds of poor arguments are impacting on people's health. It is well known that Queenslanders have the worst oral health in the country and it's pretty obvious why.

suz - 09 Aug 2013 7:01:24pm

Shame on Catalyst for presenting such a biased, unscientific segment. Anyone with any commonsense would realise that flushing 97% of fluoridated water down the drain is completely illogical. If topical application is so beneficial for teeth how is ingesting it going to help. Why does 90% of the world not fluoridate based on scientific health concerns and yet your wonderful spokespeople think they know better. Why does Tasmania have the worst teeth in Australia after fluoridating for the longest. How can a dosage that cannot be measured be safely administered to all and sundry. What about the environmental impact. Why hasn't the TGA approved Fluoride. Do your research Catalyst.

Ben - 09 Aug 2013 5:33:40pm

What a joke, I do not permit you or any other medical practitioner to medicate me without my consent, This practise should be removed ASAP.!! if people want to access industrial chemicals to keep their "teeth" healthy, it is simple!! provide "FREE" fluoride tablets at any pharmacy for pick up.!! then we have a choice to medicate ourselves or not, I smell a mass court action coming in future times, where the people will be claiming for ill health due to the forced medication without
consent.

Google firewaterfilm for more truth.

>> Reply
NJ - 09 Aug 2013 5:18:57pm

Even if fluoride is good for your teeth water should not be tampered with.

>> Reply
Mattias Ljung - 09 Aug 2013 5:15:31pm

If fluoride is so effective how come fluoride has been illegal to add to the water in Sweden since 1971?

>> Reply
• Mary - 09 Aug 2013 9:33:13pm
As I am ex producer _ I felt that the presenter didn't research his topic well enough. I have seen figures doctored over many years - it is a sorry state of affairs that our country has come to this. I myself am allergic to Fluoride and suffered with Hyperthyroidism so you can imagine I have thoroughly researched this very toxic chemical which had been added to our water supplies without our approval. It is what I call mass medication without the consent of the taxpayers of this country.

>> Reply

Emma - 12 Aug 2013 11:49:15am
It isn't illegal (against the law), the government hasn't legislated that it has to be in the water. And in Sweden they add fluoridate their salt as well as iodise.

>> Reply

• Dan Germouse - 12 Aug 2013 6:38:07pm
Fluoride chemicals are not on the list of chemicals approved for drinking water treatment in Sweden, so artificial water fluoridation is in fact illegal there. Some European countries have fluoridated salt, but to my knowledge Sweden is not one of them.

>> Reply

Mattherw Sansom - 09 Aug 2013 4:35:51pm

A very bias Pro-fluoride article, I am disappointed with Catalysts unscientific approach. Artificial fluoridation should be illegal it is unmonitored mass medication, and that would not happen in any doctors practice. The fact remains that approx 96% of the world population DO NOT fluoridate. predominantly the reason being there legal systems have found mass medication to be unethical. In Australia, money spent on fluoridation could be used to supply fluoridated toothpaste or tablets for those who want it. I for one don't want my family exposed to unnecessary chemicals! Yet as an Australian citizen I am denied this because of the flurodation policy.

>> Reply
Megan - 09 Aug 2013 4:02:37pm

I was a bit disappointed with the tone of the story. People who don't want fluoride in their water are not fools.
Water should be as pure as possible (of course chemicals are needed to keep the water safe). Putting fluoride in water is forcing medication on everyone. I live in Gosford council and despite 3 referendums fluoride was added to our water anyway.
By not putting fluoride in water, you are not stopping people from taking it. My mother gave me fluoride tablets when I was a child and I also gave my children fluoride.
Stick to your guns Queensland.
Catalyst, please just present the facts, we are the ones with an opinion.

Emma - 12 Aug 2013 11:50:23am

Actually "pure" or distilled water is not good for you to drink. You need small amounts of a variety of solutes.

Karen Michaelis - 09 Aug 2013 3:32:15pm

I have always watched, and enjoyed your formerly informative, and unbiased show. After last nights debacle on Fluoride, I won't be wasting my Thursday nights on you again. That wasn't an educated piece, it was free air time for greedy dentists. Where were the facts on where the fluoride is sourced from? I was totally embarrassed watching this BTN style of program!!!!!

Robdotcom71 - 09 Aug 2013 7:39:15pm

Greedy dentists? How could they be greedy if they are not making money... they are probably losing money due to less cavities in our teeth due to the fluoride in our water.

Katie - 09 Aug 2013 8:10:48pm

Exactly how are dentists greedy if they are actively trying to put themselves out of business by supporting water fluoridation? If they really were greedy they would be happy with these anti-fluoride decisions because it means more cavities and more business.

Jim - 10 Aug 2013 8:26:23pm

I don't get where the greedy dentist part come from. Greedy dentists would love for there to be no fluoride in the water, that will translate to more tooth decay, more fillings, and more money for greedy dentists!

Dan Germouse - 13 Aug 2013 11:25:19pm

Don't be so naive. Forced fluoridation does little or nothing to prevent cavities, but does greatly increase rates of dental fluorosis, which is expensive to treat.
• Logic - 12 Aug 2013 5:39:54pm
  Surely 'greedy dentists' would want to end fluoridation. More cavities = more work.

Dan Germouse - 09 Aug 2013 3:29:40pm

Michael Moore's claim that the 2007 NHMRC report looked at "papers of the highest quality" shows that he either has no comprehension of the concept of quality of scientific research, or he is deliberately dishonest. The simple fact is that there are no good quality studies which show that the fluoridation experiment is anything but dangerous and useless. When lead was still being added to petrol, there were problems with the accuracy of measurement of blood lead levels. The situation with fluoridation is even worse. The fluoridationist studies don't even bother to measure fluoride levels in the body, instead just treating everyone in an artificially fluoridated community as if their fluoride exposure were the same, even though it is known to be highly variable. There are other major problems with the research, such as a failure to account for confounding factors such as sugar consumption and other aspects of diet, and a lack of blinding. It is not just a coincidence that the industry-funded US scientist Robert Kehoe was a leading promoter of both the fluoridation experiment and the leaded petrol experiment.

The General Public - 09 Aug 2013 2:59:30pm

The Public Speaks: http://aswla.wordpress.com/2013/08/09/re-abc-catalyst-water-fluoridation-the-public-speak-one-long-thread-ongoing/


Did you HONESTLY think we are all just a bunch of illiterate penal-colony uneducated, stupid num-skulls? A filthy stench of all the above qualities in the arrogance displayed by the ABC & co.

You are DEFINITELY on the wrong side of History. You cannot escape how sad that is for you ie. having no integrity.

Cheers, The Australian public.

Rene Erhardt - 09 Aug 2013 2:55:38pm

This report was most disappointing being so much out of touch with the concerns in the community and the scientific evidence. At a time when the inventor of this insidious scheme, the Americans, are starting to opt out county by county due to the most obvious detrimental effects, which is dental fluorosis, after decades of polluting their drinking water with a toxic industrial waste product, it is absolutely astounding to find Catalyst peddling this out-dated propaganda. There is conclusive evidence that fluoridating water does not do anything to improve or avoid dental caries. Most European countries never fluoridated their water or stopped it soon after realising the ill effects and have exactly the same rates of dental caries as fluoridating countries. Recent research as carried out
by Prof. Paul Connett, an environmental chemist who spent the last 16 years looking into water fluoridation data worldwide shows clearly that we are dealing with a hazardous waste substance which has no place in our water. Details can be found in his book: The case against fluoride. Excellent background info on research including DPI studies from Queensland can be found at the website: fluoridationqueensland.com/blog
We are very happy that we are given the option to make a stand against water fluoridation in Queensland by the new government and we are campaigning to opt out council by council.

>> Reply
Yvette Muir - 09 Aug 2013 2:42:05pm
Way to go with your disgustingly biased pro-fluoride report Catalyst!! You're really showing your true colours here! No better than a tabloid. Calling the fact that people are waking up to the facts about Fluoride toxicity a "problem"?? What a load of utter garbage! We are not just our teeth!! It's not rocket science! There is mountains of new research that proves that Fluoride is directly linked with many long term illnesses such as Alzheimer's, Arthritis, Asthma, bone cancer and osteoporosis, skeletal fluorosis and many types of cancer. Campbell Newman hand-balled the responsibility to local council because he doesn't want to be held accountable when the truth comes out! A gutless but smart move on his part.
Please don't spread such dis-information. You guys are part of the problem! Be part of the solution. For the sake of the health of Australians!

>> Reply
EM - 09 Aug 2013 2:31:13pm
The devil is in the details.
What you fail to address is the current epidemic of hypothyroidism. Fluoride was originally used to treat HYPERthyroidism with levels similar to that consumed in drinking water. What is this mass medication doing? Particularly when combined with other endocrine disruptors like mercury?
The use of fluoride to treat osteoporosis was a disaster - increasing osteoporotic fractures. Some studies have found that fluoride may be associated with increased hip fractures in women. Fluoride is not added to water in most European countries.
Given the relative lack of tooth decay found by Weston Price in primitive diets, should we instead be asking what are we eating that is causing so much decay or is it really caused by malnutrition (energy dense, nutrient poor, high carbohydrate diets).
Treating the symptoms (and not addressing the cause) is the real elephant in the room.

>> Reply
Sandra Camm - 09 Aug 2013 2:18:42pm
The first part re obesity was one of the most fair and detailed comment by media re food/drinks sugar content & chemical re-action. However, was followed by an abysmal biased report by Michael Foley & M. Moore who are obviously pro fluoride - not a very balanced coverage at all. Would like to see "real scientists" for/agst have a debate.

>> Reply
Jarnez - 09 Aug 2013 1:54:58pm
Dr Denis Ingham
That's a lot. Maybe in a fluoridated area, if you had fluoride in the water supply, your curious experience would have been lower.

I reckon he said "your caries experience".

>> Reply
David McRae - 09 Aug 2013 1:44:57pm

Can you explain why there was no balance provided in this story on water fluoridation? I waited, and waited, and waited, for the ABC to do what it does best. And it never came. There are many scientists, and quite a few dentists and doctors who can speak very well and scientifically on the serious problems with fluoride. You apparently ignored them. I am sure you were urged to ignore them by Dr Foley and other supporters of fluoridation - but that does not mean that you, the ABC, must do what you are told by these fluoride promoters. You gave a little 5 second flash of Merilyn Haines speaking at a meeting. How about interviewing her for as long as you did Dr Foley. How about Professor Diesendorf from Sydney? Or a former president of the Australian Dental Association, Dr A Harms?
If you don't think that opponents of fluoridation have credibility, stop for a moment and consider the Health Departments of Sweden, Netherlands, France, Germany, Finland and virtually every country of Europe. They have stated their very sound reasons for rejecting fluoridation. But you are utterly silent about this viewpoint. Why? What drives your extreme one-sidedness on this? Please explain?

>> Reply
Louise Dunn - 09 Aug 2013 1:31:35pm

I am disgusted at this totally one-sided and biased piece of reporting. Why did Catalyst refuse to interview Fluoride Free WA who offered to present the other side of the story - the truth. What Michael Moore failed to mention was what kind of fluoride is put into our water and where it comes from. Calcium fluoride may be beneficial for our teeth however that is not what is added to our water. In WA we have Fluorosilicic Acid - this is a corrosive toxic chemical by product from the phosphate fertiliser industry. We also have sodium fluoride which comes from the aluminium industry in China and Belgium - neither of these countries fluoridate their own drinking water incidentally. Michael Moore says "It's like decisions on vaccinations or speed limits or bicycle helmets or smoking. Major health decisions like that are best made at State and Federal level."
Wrong Mr Moore - all health decisions regarding my body are made by me. And as long as State and Federal Governments are making a decision to add poison to our drinking water I will be making the decision not to drink it.

>> Reply
Fiona Dobson - 09 Aug 2013 1:03:54pm

Thank you for your segment on the benefits of fluoridation. I live in the Rockhampton region and was dismayed and appalled by the local council's decision to remove fluoride from the water supply without any public consultation. Sadly, councillors chose not to listen to the science and pander to a very vocal minority. I do hope the Premier Campbell Newman changes his mind about this issue because, frankly this decision should not be left up to local councillors, many of whom are poorly educated and misinformed about the benefits of fluoridation.

>> Reply
 •  MM, Qld - 09 Aug 2013 7:48:38pm
You obviously expect governments to look after your health irrespective of whether it's good for you or not!
Dental caries has more to do with good diet and nutrition, dental hygiene (brushing teeth after every meal) and avoiding high sugar drinks and foods....not the lack of fluoride in the drinking water.
What science have you been reading????
>> Reply

Sonja - 09 Aug 2013 8:00:42pm
You really need to do some research Fiona, because fluoride is NOT the panacea it has been made out to be. For example, look at WHO statistics and you will find tooth decay rates are virtually the same in fluoridated and unfluoridated countries. In fact several unfluoridated countries have better rates than any fluoridated country. Also look at the work of former proponents who changed their minds after they researched it themselves - like recently retired Professor of Preventive Dentistry at Toronto University, Dr Hardy Limeback, who issued a public apology to former students for previously having promoted fluoridation. That took a lot of courage for someone in his position. Also the late Dr John Colquhoun, former Chief Dental Officer in Auckland, whose job it was to promote fluoridation throughout New Zealand, wrote "Why I changed my mind about water fluoridation" which you can find on the internet. It is a very revealing paper, which shows how (and why) fluoridation is doggedly promoted, despite authorities being aware it does not work effectively.
>> Reply

Ailsa Boyden - 10 Aug 2013 11:03:02am
Respectfully, Fiona, 'councillors' did listen to the science: i.e. Hamilton City Councillors (the ones who hadn't disqualified themselves owing to a conflict of interest). They listened after received more than 1,500 submissions (most against fluoridation) at 1 4-day Fluoridation Tribunal Hearing in May-June 2013. This was videoed (Google to find videos). Following the hearing councillors voted 7-1 to end fluoridation after about 50 years of fluoridation.
>> Reply

Shane Woods - 10 Aug 2013 1:31:11pm
Fiona, the product you are so eager to have in your water is: HYDROFLUOROSILICIC ACID it is taken from industrial scrubbers, it is NOT filtered or cleaned so it is also contaminated with numerous heavy metals. it really is a poison. the amounts being added to, yes I said added because Rockhampton water have not yet ceased fluoridation. so it isn't just one poison you (we) are ingesting. fluoride is ONLY beneficial when applied to the OUTSIDE of your teeth. in fact the law in the U.S. toothpaste must carry this warning: IF SWALLOWED SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. finally, bear in mind that the groups telling you that fluoride is safe are the same organisations that told your parents that DDT, Cigarettes and Asbestos not only harmless but good for you. please do your own research. I can give you reams of evidence of more than 40 years of research.
>> Reply

Barb Smith - 11 Aug 2013 8:33:30pm
There are 4 people in Gladstone CQ with health problems caused by fluoridated water. It was not the Labor Government that introduced fluoride to our State, but Anna Bligh and Michael Foley. The other MP's never had a say in the matter because of how it was done. 15 Councils in Qld have stopped Fluoridating and it should be stopped all over Australia. 95%
of the world is not fluoridated. It is a toxic chemical waste and should not be in our water.

Franklyn - 09 Aug 2013 12:44:18pm

I have heard both sides of this argument over the years and have come to this conclusion, "IT'S ALL ABOUT CHOICE," no one can FORCE YOU to digest ANY legal substance if you CHOOSE not to. As NO ONE can say you cant have it if you WANT it, "If you pay water rates you have a RIGHT to pay for only what you decide/choose you want in your body," its really that simple.

Lesley - 10 Aug 2013 6:16:56pm

SOOOOoooo disappointed Catalyst. How legal do you think compulsory medication can be? I'll love to see a 'class action' to test how legal it is.

David Smith - 12 Aug 2013 9:39:09am

It's impossible to satisfy all parties. When you don't fluoridate, customers say you are not doing your job properly and when you do fluoridate, they are angry that you are "mass medicating". There are mixed views within the water industry and a certain amount of ambivalence. When a water authority is told to add fluoride to the water, it tends to be all or nothing.

Some years ago I believe that Gold Coast Water issued free fluoride tablets and fluoride drops to those ratepayers that wanted fluoridated water. It's obviously easier to add fluoride to your own water than take it out after we have dosed it into the town supply.

Maureen - 09 Aug 2013 11:18:15am

Good Morning

I think that your programme on Fluoride last night was so biased and one-sided. You must know that there is such contention about Fluoride and yet, you gave such a one-sided view of it. 99% of western continental Europe has rejected, banned, or stopped fluoridation due to environmental, health, legal, or ethical concerns. Surely that tells you something. You only have to Google "fluoridation of public water" to see what a contentious subject this is and not one mention of the other side of the coin!! Catalyst you disappoint me. I thought that Catalyst was a programme that gave all sides to the argument. It seems not and I'm so disappointed in your show to the point that I may not watch it anymore.
Some of the links below show the arguments for the “other side™.

Maureen

Dr. Paul Connett on Fluoride Dangers

Did you know that fluoride, the toxic drug added in your drinking water to "help eliminate cavities" may actually lead to low IQ, especially in children?


Fluoride in Your Pineal Gland Might Cause Cancer

Fluoride in drinking water can harm your pineal gland and alter melatonin production, which raises your risk of Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, and other diseases.


Dr. Bill Osmunson Talks about the Dangers of Fluoride

The fluoride in your drinking water is not pharmaceutical grade and is a toxic industrial waste contaminated with dangerous pollutants like lead and arsenic.


Fluoride Can Impair Thyroid Function

Fluoride may directly or indirectly interfere with thyroid function, and can be more harmful to older women, who are more prone to develop hypothyroidism.


Fluoride Linked to Lower IQ and Neurological Impairment

The Centers for Disease Control claims that fluoride is safe, but the Environmental Protection Agency believes that fluoride can impair neurological function.


Anti-Fluoride Efforts Buoyed By Sulfuryl Fluoride Ban

The recent ban on the use of sulfuryl fluoride as a food fumigant shows that the war against fluoride is gaining ground.

Robdotcom71 - 09 Aug 2013 7:43:34pm
The articles you cite via mercola.com are not valid.

>> Reply

Jay Mark - 09 Aug 2013 10:32:31am

Hello folks at Catalyst.
I usually hold your program in high regard for its open-minded exploration of our world of interesting discoveries.

It's with some perturbation & disappointment that your program recently promoted Water Fluoridation, & was clearly biased towards its further implementation, without any counter argument being presented. I expected better. I consider this episode highly irresponsible & due for stern criticism.

As a Science program, I would have thought that your research should have encompassed views by other than the two most forceful proponents of mass medication. I have made many enquiries into the efficacy of Water Fluoridation & have discovered much to my horror that it is a highly toxic, industrial waste from China that isn't even a medical grade medicine, that is also contaminated with heavy metals & is being put in our clean drinking water as a panacea for tooth decay. Research why many countries in Europe, USA & Canada have banned it, Research Dental Fluorosis & the aggravation of osteoporosis.

Please do your research thoroughly & make all sides of this public health debate available for all to discern, rather than producing a highly popular program viewed by many, as a one-sided promotion on the GOOD that fluoride does for our teeth. Please research why, it is advised, that the very young, the pregnant mothers, the aged & the Kidney compromised, should NOT ingest fluoride in drinking water. Does it make any sense to drink something that should be applied topically to the tooth surface rather than ingested, taken through the bloodstream to be deposited in bones & the vital organs of the body. It would be like pouring oil all over your car to give it an oil change. This dosage is also uncontrollable, as athletes who drink many times the amounts of water to replace that which is lost through physical exertion.

Further more, there has never been a referendum on this matter (that is we the people we never given a choice) & governments simply went ahead with their policy without the proper painstaking & comprehensive investigation, which most medicines are put through before they are put on the market.

The facts exist that this form of forced mass medication will have its deleterious outcome in years to come, just like DDT & Asbestos, were once thought HARMLESS. Please address this publicly & respond with an honest reevaluation to all those who are deeply concerned with this unnecessary & unwanted poisoning of our water.

In open protest, Jay Mark.

>> Reply
Who is telling the "Truth"? If I want fluoride to stop my teeth from rotting then it should be my personal choice to do so. Putting it in the public water supply is another matter and as far as I know it is not naturally occurring fluoride any more. This subject needs to be debated at length and not left up to the so called guardians of our health to act on our behalf and without our permission.

Anna Michalik - 12 Aug 2013 1:16:57pm
I too will not be watching Catalyst again. I cannot believe that your program was so unscientific and I now understand why so many people don't trust Dentists, Doctors and scientists any more. Why can't these so called medical people put their money where their mouths are and offer to pay for all the children and adults dental fluorosis treatment. These proffessional people should be held accountable for their opinions especially when many of them haven't bothered to look at the data. Merilyn Hains and all the other people who are trying to get the truth out should be voted Australians of the year not like the paid puppets on the pro fluoride side.

Rhys - 13 Aug 2013 12:58:23pm
Unfortunately, the science is perfectly clear. Not enough fluoride damages your teeth. A small amount of fluoride in water makes a huge improvement to your teeth and has no advserse health risks. A large amount of fluoride is dangerous.

Water is much the same. Did you know water, in excessive amounts can also be considered toxic? Nobody is suggesting we should stop drinking water.

Paracetomal (or Panadol) - their is another great example. In small quantities, it reduces fevers. It is quite safe and has no adverse effects, provided you stay within the recommended dose. Too much and it will kill you.

Dan Germouse - 13 Aug 2013 11:14:03pm
Fluoride is not an essential nutrient, a fact which was officially accepted more than 20 years ago. People can have perfectly healthy teeth without fluoride. The Iowa study (2009) found that there was hardly any difference in fluoride intake between caries free children and children with caries, and a
庞大的重叠，所以没有这样的事情为一个最优的氟化物摄入量。

Philip Robertson - 09 Aug 2013 10:22:35am

听教授迈克尔·摩尔说“它回到了有毒学的一个基本教义——剂量决定毒性”可能解释了为什么他错误地认为水氟化是安全的。

这不仅仅是化学物质的剂量问题，而是个人是否能够解毒该化学物质也决定了这个人是否会被毒死。

如执业者在2009年之后发现的，一些人在喝下四分之一毫克的氟化物在一杯水中的严重反应。这种反应包括严重的呼吸问题，皮肤问题如氟化皮炎和胃肠道痉挛。这些毒性症状通常只有在摄入很多很多这种剂量才出现。

我相信摩尔教授可能理解这些个人对氟化物的敏感性。

Julie - 09 Aug 2013 10:14:43am

真是无聊且懒惰的报道，对一个如此重要的个人自由和选择的健康话题的报道是偏见的，单方面的。他们那个故事是在谁的议程上产生的？

Merilyn Qlders For Safe Water - 09 Aug 2013 10:09:57am

一个非常偏见且单方面的氟化物推广宣传材料——正如我们所知，Catalyst采访了澳大利亚两个最活跃的强制氟化物联盟的代表。其中有很多科学证据表明氟化物可能对脆弱的群体有害，但Catalyst，包括他们自己，是澳大利亚领先的科学调查方案。当然，他们从来没有提出任何东西。Catalyst现在只是一种政治节目，他们不值得任何他们曾经拥有的尊重。他们是否阅读了Sheldon教授写给上议院的信件？

Sheldon教授是约克大学氟化物审查委员会的主席和创始人，他担心审查结果的总结被错误地推广了。这项审查是这个领域内最独立的，也是以最高国际科学标准开展的。非常令人担忧的是，在新闻稿和简报中误解了公众对审查结果的发现。
British Fluoridation Society and others abroad. I should like to correct some of these errors.

1 Whilst there is evidence that water fluoridation is effective at reducing caries, the quality of the studies was generally moderate and the size of the estimated benefit, only of the order of 15%, is far from "massive".

2 The review found water fluoridation to be significantly associated with high levels of dental fluorosis which was not characterised as "just a cosmetic issue".

3 The review did not show water fluoridation to be safe. The quality of the research was too poor to establish with confidence whether or not there are potentially important adverse effects in addition to the high levels of fluorosis. The report recommended that more research was needed.

4 There was little evidence to show that water fluoridation has reduced social inequalities in dental health.

5 The review could come to no conclusion as to the cost-effectiveness of water fluoridation or whether there are different effects between natural or artificial fluoridation.

6 Probably because of the rigour with which this review was conducted, these findings are more cautious and less conclusive than in most previous reviews.

7 The review team was surprised that in spite of the large number of studies carried out over several decades there is a dearth of reliable evidence with which to inform policy.

>> Reply
Han Barkmeyer - 09 Aug 2013 9:53:20am

Why did Catalyst only interview the toxicologist professor Michael Moore about the "benefits" of fluoride? Why did Catalyst, for the sake of balance, not interview Dr Paul Connett, professor of chemistry and toxicology, or another equally qualified scientist?
Is it because their views are contradictory to the powerful pro-fluoride lobby who wants to turn back the clock and stem the anti-fluoride tide sweeping Queensland?

The same also applies to pro-fluoride dentist Michael Foley. For the sake of balance, Catalyst could have also featured an interview with an anti-fluoride dentist like David Kennedy, former President of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), and Fluoride Information Officer, who said that "water fluoridation delivers a drug to infants at a level which would be gross malpractice if prescribed by a physician or dentist."

Catalyst could have interviewed Dr. Andrew Harms, former President of the Australian Dental Association S.A. Branch, who deeply regretted supporting and facilitating fluoridation into South Australian country areas.

And Catalyst could also have mentioned the fact that countries still artificially fluoridating their water supplies are in a shrinking minority. Even in those countries like the USA and Canada, more and more cities are stopping fluoridation.

98% of European countries do not fluoridate their drinking water. Catalyst could have opened tonight’s program with the breaking news that Israel will stop fluoridating their drinking water by 2014.
That, of course, is not what the powerful pro-fluoride lobby, with their scientists for hire and governments in their pockets, wants the public to know.
It is only a matter of time when one day people in Australia will look back in disbelief that once their drinking water was poisoned with industrial waste products, never tested for human consumption. They will remember that it was also thanks to programs like tonight’s Catalyst, which aided and abetted the criminals “aluminum and fertiliser industries desperately trying to keep it in our drinking water so they don’t have to bear the costs of disposing of it legally - with ridiculous one-sided pro-fluoride propaganda.

The benefits of fluoride, if any, is topical, like fluoridated tooth paste, and not systemic. Ever heard oncologists arguing that suntan lotion should not only be put on the skin, but also be swallowed to prevent skin cancers? That’s laughable isn’t it? But that’s exactly what dentists, brainwashed by the fluoride toothpaste manufacturers' sponsored universities, are telling us to do.