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Dear Parent:

The entire body needs vitamins and minerals for good health. The teeth and bones also need a special mineral called fluoride. Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay. It is also of special benefit to children, because their teeth are still forming in their mouth.

The best way of getting fluoride is by drinking fluoridated water. If the water in your area does not contain enough fluoride, chewable fluoride tablets may be prescribed for your child by the dentist or physician. These tablets should be taken daily until the child is thirteen. Ask your child's physician or dentist if your community's water supply is fluoridated and how your child can get the fluoride needed for good dental health. Attached is an information sheet about fluoride and ways to get fluoride.

You can help your family get fluoride by choosing—and using—home dental care products that contain fluoride. Fluoride toothpaste's are available in the dental products section of most stores. Be sure to look for the ADA Seal of Acceptance when selecting these items. This Seal tells you that these products have been proved effective by the American Dental Association.

Another way to prevent decay is to have a dentist apply a sealant on your child's back teeth. A sealant is a plastic material that your dentist brushes on the chewing surfaces to prevent germs from getting in the deep grooves of the back teeth.

Fluoride and sealants, along with brushing, flossing, good nutrition and regular dental visits, will help keep your child's teeth healthy.

Sincerely,

Lori L. Brewer, LPN

Lori L. Brewer, LPN
Head Start Health Services Specialist

Dental #4
HS-22 2/11

WAYS OF GETTING FLUORIDE

FLUORIDE IN THE DRINKING WATER

Fluoride is a mineral that helps teeth become stronger and helps prevent decay. One excellent way to get fluoride is to drink water that contains the right amount of fluoride. If you are not sure whether your drinking water contains the right amount of fluoride for good dental health, ask your dentist or hygienist. Children who drink water with the right amount of fluoride have fewer cavities.

Using fluoride is one of the safest, most effective, and least expensive ways to prevent tooth decay. Its use is supported by the American Dental Association, the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, and many other major health organization.

OTHER WAYS OF GETTING FLUORIDE

In addition to getting fluoride through your drinking water, there are other ways you and your family can get protection from fluoride. Your dentist or hygienist can tell you what is best for you and your family.

At the Dental Office -

If you drink water that does not contain the right amount of fluoride, your dentist or physician may prescribe fluoride tablets or drops for your children to take every day. For maximum protection, fluoride tablets or drops should be taken from birth until the child is thirteen years old. In addition, your dentist may put a fluoride gel on your child's teeth. This helps protect the surface of the tooth from decay.

At Home -

Head Start centers give children fluoride tablets to those without fluoridated water, or those with low fluoridation. Fluoride tablets are another way of protecting teeth. These tablets are chewed and dissolved in the mouth. Even if the water in your area is fluoridated, dental care products containing fluoride should be used at home. You and your family should use a fluoride toothpaste when you brush your teeth. Those fluoride toothpaste's that have the Seal of Acceptance of the American Dental Association have been proved effective and safe for daily use, should be used at home. You and your family should use a fluoride toothpaste when you brush your teeth. Those fluoride toothpaste's that have the Seal of Acceptance of the American Dental Association have been proved effective and safe for daily use.