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Subject: Why I oppose fluoridation of drinking water

I am not a chemist with a Ph.D. but, here is the statement from a woman who is. These are my reasons for opposing fluoridation of public drinking water as well. Anne Fehlman

#### Why I Oppose Fluoridation of Public Drinking Water

It's Not Just About Teeth

By Anne Marie Helmenstine, Ph.D., About.com Guide

As About's Guide to Chemistry, I usually write articles about how things work. Even if I have an opinion on a topic, it rarely applies to these articles. However, I've been outspoken in my stance against the fluoridation of public drinking water. I get e-mail from people on both sides of the issue, but most of the letters come from people wondering why I oppose fluoridation or from people seeking to make a case against fluoridation in their community. As always, I encourage you to go to peer-reviewed publications and references. These studies may be technical and you may need help understanding them, but it's best to go to the source for important decisions that affect the policies in your community. Don't take my word for or against fluoridation. Similarly, don't assume that the American Dental Association knows more about the topic than you do. Even if fluoridation is effective (and I don't believe it is), I oppose it. Whether or not it works to reduce cavities is really a small part of the issue. My reasons:

Fluoridation of water has not been shown to reduce the incidence of cavities. Topical fluoride (e.g., toothpastes and fluoride rinses) has been shown to work. Ingestion of fluoride has not. Yes, the incidence of cavities has decreased since fluoridation has been introduced. However, the incidence of cavities has decreased even in areas without fluoridation. Yes, fluoridation has been shown to slow the eruption of teeth in children, which could have the effect of reducing cavities from bottle-feeding. However, there is also evidence that the delayed eruption is an indicator of damage incurred during tooth development. Ultimately, the link between ingestion of fluoride and reduction of cavities is tenuous at best.

Fluoride that we put in water today will still be in water tomorrow. Fluoride doesn't magically disappear from water once it has been added. Its presence and accumulation have profound implications for aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. It is not a simple matter to remove the fluoride from water or from the plants and animals that ingest it.

Fluoride is poisonous. Relatively low concentrations have been shown, conclusively, to have detrimental effects on human and animal development.

It's impossible to control the dose. People drink different amounts of water, so the fluoride dose cannot be regulated.

It's unethical to force a medication onto people. Even if it was beneficial, fluoridation isn't something you get to choose or not choose. This is my bottom-line reason for opposing fluoridation.