



# Fluoride = Healthy Smiles

## What is fluoride?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral found in water, soil and in some foods.

## Why is fluoride important?

Fluoride hardens and protects tooth enamel against cavities.

## Where can I find fluoride?

Fluoride can be found in toothpaste, mouth rinse, treatments from your dentist or hygienist and tap water.

The City of Ottawa monitors and adjusts the fluoride level in the drinking water supply to a concentration of 0.7 mg/L in tap water. This level has been determined to provide optimal dental health benefits, in accordance with the Health Canada recommendations. Water fluoridation is endorsed by reputable health organizations throughout the world including the World Health Organization, Health Canada and the Ontario Medical Association.

The City of Ottawa does not adjust the fluoride level of the five communal well systems (Carp, Munster, Kings Park, Richmond, Shadow Ridge and Vars).

Most disposable water filters do not remove fluoride from drinking water. Check the label or contact the manufacturer for fluoride levels in bottled water.

## Well and spring water

Free testing of water fluoride levels is available if you are on well water or spring water. Call 3-1-1 for a free water test bottle and instructions.

## How do I get the right amount of fluoride?

### Birth to 3 years old

Do not use toothpaste. Wipe gums or brush teeth with tap water after feedings and before bed.

If the child is determined to be at risk of developing tooth decay by a dental professional, use no more than a grain of rice size amount of fluoridated toothpaste twice per day.

### 3 to 6 years old

Use no more than a green pea size amount of fluoridated toothpaste twice per day.



## Remember

- Toothpaste should never be swallowed
- All products containing fluoride such as toothpaste, rinses, and gels must be stored out of reach of children
- Supervise children when they are using these products

**Healthy teeth lead to a healthy body.  
You can keep your teeth for life.**

**Need more information?**

**Talk to your dentist or dental hygienist or call Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744**