

FLUORIDE



Dr. Goodwine practices evidence-based dentistry and closely follows the recommendations of best practices from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. He highly recommends educating yourself on the topic of fluoride use from non-biased sources. He believes it is your choice as to what you safely expose your child to and will respect your opinions on the matter regardless of how you think or feel about the topic. Below is a summary of information on Fluoride. Dr. Goodwine is happy to share his opinions and recommendations for fluoride use for your child at their initial appointment or at their routine visits.

What Is Fluoride?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral compound found in water and soil. It is also present in foods and beverages at varying concentrations. Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay by making the entire tooth surface more resistant to acid attacks from the bacteria that live in the plaque on your teeth. Fluoride promotes remineralization (adding minerals such as calcium back into your teeth), which aids in repairing early decay before a cavity forms in the tooth. There are two ways to increase fluoride protection: topical and systemic applications.

- **Topical Fluoride:** Professionally administered topical fluorides such as foams, gels or varnishes are applied by Dr. Goodwine and left on for a few minutes, usually during a cleaning appointment. For patients with a high risk of cavities, Dr. Goodwine may prescribe a special toothpaste for daily home use.
- **Systemic Fluoride:** Systemic fluoride is taken into the body through consuming fluoridated water, fluoride supplements, or foods and beverages. Once systemic fluoride is absorbed via the gastrointestinal tract, the blood distributes it throughout the entire body. Fluoride is then deposited into unerupted, developing teeth. Systemic fluoride is also found in saliva, and it continually bathes the teeth, providing a topical application to protect teeth. Dr. Goodwine will determine if fluoride supplements are necessary for your child during their routine cleaning appointment.

Does My Child Actually Need Fluoride?

Fluoride is becoming less effective because kids are snacking more often now than in years past. The more snacking that occurs, the less remineralization happens for the natural minerals to be incorporated. Many communities add fluoride to their water supply. All dental organizations recommend using fluoride toothpaste. A catchy phrase to follow is “spit, don’t rinse” meaning spit the extra toothpaste out, but don’t rinse it off your teeth. This is an easy “fluoride treatment” that can be done daily, even Dr. Goodwine does this!

Anything in too high of a dose can be harmful; fluoride is no exception. But, don’t let the conspiracy scare tactics turn you off to something that has been proven over and over again to be safe and effective. Is fluoride required to prevent cavities? No. The minerals already in your saliva, even without fluoride, are sufficient to maintain health. Fluoride will “harden” your enamel and reduce the risk of decay.

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