

Water Fluoridation Could End

Keywords

[fluoride](#) · [water](#)

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Artificial water fluoridation may soon end in Canada, making low-fluoride tap water a truly safe option for everyone including babies. Several regions and cities (Niagara, Dryden, Kingston and Quebec City) have permanently stopped adding the corrosive industrial waste fluoride product to drinking water. Pressure to stop artificial fluoridation comes from individuals and groups, including IICPH, for municipal authorities to act on current scientific evidence of harm to children and medically vulnerable groups, and to end unnecessary pollution with fluoride, lead and arsenic in sewage. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment is conducting a review of the toxicity of fluoridation chemicals after a citizen's petition was granted under the Environmental Bill of Rights last fall. The report is due in 2010.

Recently, Health Canada halved its recommended safe level of artificially added fluoride in water, from 1.5 to 0.7 parts per million, but continues to deny the mountain of evidence that water fluoridation is harmful to health and environment.

This past summer, IICPH attended the International Society for Fluoride Research and Fluoride Action Network conferences at U. of Toronto, Mississauga, held August 7-11. We networked with Citizens for a Safe Environment, People for Safe Drinking Water, and many individuals and concerned groups like ours, working to end artificial fluoridation on precautionary principles of reducing environmental and individual harm. The conferences were opened with a press conference at Queen's Park, courtesy of MPP Peter Tabuns. Dr. Vyvyan Howard, president of International Society of Doctors for the Environment and Dr. Paul Connett, retired professor of Environmental Chemistry at St. Lawrence U., presented a review of the research linking lowered IQ in children with fluoride exposure during gestation and early childhood, and fielded questions from the press. A video of the press conference and several of the conference presentations may be viewed at the FAN website www.fluoridealert.org.

The conferences ended with two stimulating public forums held at the Steelworker's Union Hall on Cecil St. in downtown Toronto, organized by Citizens for a Safe Environment.

Unfortunately, public health authorities from federal, provincial and municipal levels of government and dental association representatives refused invitations to attend the ISFR conference. However, the Ontario Ministry of Environment was well represented by Dr. Satish Deshpande from the department of drinking water standards.

According to the research, consuming fluoride in pregnancy, at the increased intake range from naturally or artificially fluoridated water and associated foods and beverages processed with it, can cause a small decrease in maternal thyroid function and worsen iodine deficiency that harms the developing brain of the fetus, reducing IQ for life by an average of 2 to 10 points. When the baby is fed formula instead of breast milk, the fluoride intake is at least 100 times higher and the risk of IQ reduction is even greater.

We heard from doctors and researchers in China, India, Turkey and Pakistan, dealing with the public health effects of chronic fluoride poisoning such as maternal anemia and low birth weight babies. The effects of excessive fluoride intake from natural and industrial contamination are greatly worsened in the developing world because of commercial and public health promotion of fluoride as beneficial for teeth. A small faction of the World Health Organization aggressively promotes global water fluoridation and universal use of topical dental fluorides regardless of existing levels of fluoride poisoning or iodine deficiency in the population.

Dr. Gideon Forman of Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), an affiliate of the International Society of Doctors for the Environment, made the introductory speech at the public forum. In September 2008, CAPE released its position statement recommending against water fluoridation on scientific, ethical, and medical grounds.

— *Aliss Terpstra*

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