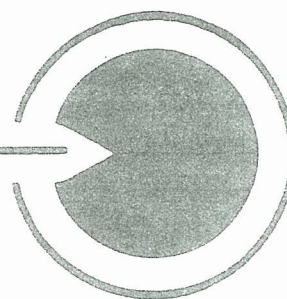


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FLUORIDE A STORM BREWING!

Michael F. Ziff, D.D.S., and Sam Ziff

A member of the New Jersey General Assembly (State Legislature) has recently called upon FDA Commissioner Dr. David Kessler to remove fluoride drops and tablets from the market immediately. Assemblyman John V. Kelly has discovered that these products have never been examined for safety or effectiveness, nor have they ever been approved for use by the FDA.

It all began in November of 1992, after the publication of a study by the New Jersey Department of Health that showed an increase of a certain bone cancer (osteosarcoma) in young males living in communities with fluoridated water supplies compared to those in non-fluoridated areas.

The study had confirmed results from a larger national study, as well as several animal studies.

The alarmed Assemblyman began an investigation of the subject. He first requested studies demonstrating the safety and effectiveness of fluoride supplements (drops and tablets) from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. They informed him that they had no such studies and referred him to the National Institute of Dental Research (NIDR), the dental branch of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NIDR also denied possession of any studies on the subject, claiming that it was the domain of the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Meanwhile, Assemblyman Kelly became aware of the controversy within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over the fluoridation of water supplies. The many studies linking fluoride to a number of health problems were being suppressed. These included cancer, hip fractures and other bone fractures. Dr. William Marcus, the senior science advisor in the EPA's water division had been fired for whistle blowing about the dangers of fluoride. A court trial had fully exonerated Dr. Marcus and ordered the EPA to reinstate him with back pay and damages. To this date the EPA has delayed compliance with the court order.

Since 1938 Federal Law has required that prescription drug manufacturers submit new drug applications with evidence of safety and effectiveness to the FDA for their approval. Assemblyman Kelly requested these studies from the FDA. He was shocked when the FDA informed him that they had no drug applications and no studies demonstrating either the safety or

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effectiveness of fluoride drops or tablets. According to Frank Fazzari, the head of the FDA's Prescription Drug Compliance Branch, these supplements are "unapproved new drugs", even though they have been prescribed to millions of children for years.

Assemblyman Kelly, on 3 June 1993, formally requested that Commissioner Kessler comply with United States Law by removing fluoride drops and tablets from the market. He also urged the President of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry to immediately inform all members that fluoride supplements are unapproved new drugs for which the FDA has no evidence of safety or effectiveness.

IS FLUORIDE SAFE?

Fluoride is toxic, of that there is no doubt. It is used as an insecticide and rodent poison! One might argue that everything is poisonous if the dose is high enough, so "the dose makes the poison." While this may be true, there are certainly tremendous variances in the "toxic thresholds" of poisons, that dose which causes significant pathology. Who can argue that ethyl alcohol (the form in alcoholic beverages) is as toxic as methyl (wood) alcohol; or that Salmonella toxin is as poisonous as Botulism toxin?

Published research studies have shown that fluoride has a harmful effect on the immune system at exposure levels as low as 0.5 ppm, well below the level added to water supplies. It is also documented that children have died from fluoride exposure from treatments administered in dental offices and that fluoridated toothpaste tubes contain enough fluoride to kill small children.

Further, it has been scientifically demonstrated that fluoride causes brittle bones, leading to easy fracture, as well as a harmful effect on the thyroid gland and a contribution to the hardening of arteries. Finally, fluoride is clearly carcinogenic, a factor that by itself precludes its approval for general use by the public.

All of this is very well documented by Dr. John Yiamouyiannis in his recently updated book "Fluoride, the Aging Factor". Bio-Probe highly recommends this book and considers it "must reading" for individuals interested in the subject, and most certainly for all dentists.

IS FLUORIDE EFFECTIVE IN PREVENTING TOOTH DECAY?

In view of the compelling scientific evidence condemning the use of fluoride, one must question why its use continues. The obvious argument is that its use has resulted in a significant reduction of the incidence of dental caries (decay).

Dental journals are replete with studies and articles suggesting the effectiveness of fluoridated water in the prevention of dental decay. These reports have firmly convinced the vast bulk of the dental profession. On the other hand, other studies provide evidence that fluoridated water does not lead to the reduction of tooth decay.

So who is right? The answer to that question requires careful consideration. First, it must be acknowledged that the incidence of dental decay is decreasing, of that there is no doubt. The debate concerns the reasons for the decrease.

Studies on the effectiveness of fluoride are "epidemiologic" studies, which compare groups of individuals with or without the factor being investigated. One must be extremely careful in considering epidemiologic studies; remember the old adage "figures do not lie, but liars figure". There are a great many factors that can affect the results of epidemiologic studies; these are called "confounding variables."

There can be more than one possible factor influencing a disease, such as dental decay. For example, alterations in customary dietary habits and increased awareness of oral hygiene and dental care are definite possibilities. The wonders of modern communications, especially television advertising, have had a clear impact on life in the developed world.

To evaluate this factor, one must investigate the rates of dental decay in developed nations that have banned or forbidden the addition of fluoride to water supplies. There are eight such nations in western Europe, all of which exhibit reductions in dental decay comparable to those in the United States and other countries allowing fluoridation of water supplies. This evidence suggests that factors other than water fluoridation are responsible for reductions in tooth decay.