



Spokane Colleges Head Start and ECEAP FLUORIDE INFORMATION HANDOUT

Fluoride is a mineral - it occurs naturally in many foods, and it occurs naturally at a beneficial level in some (but **not** all) water supplies.

Fluoride can help prevent tooth decay because it is absorbed by teeth and bones when applied to teeth and swallowed in tablet or liquid form (as prescribed by a medical/dental provider).

Fluoride is added in small amounts to some toothpastes, gels, and mouthwashes. Use with your small child only when he/she is able to spit out the toothpaste, gel or mouthwash after cleaning his/her teeth. Only use an amount equal to a "smear".

To give your child fluoride that is swallowed, your dentist or doctor needs to write a prescription. Fluoride treatments are often covered by dental insurance.

The healthy habit of taking prescription fluoride works best when given at bedtime after tooth-brushing when eating and drinking (other than water) is done for the day and should not be taken within 2 hours of drinking or eating calcium-rich products.

Resources:

Access to Baby & Child Dentistry (ABCD) Program:

- <https://srhd.org/programs-and-services/dental-health-program/access-to-baby-child-dentistry-program-abcd-through-age-5>

Access to Baby & Child Dentistry (ABCD) Program Welcome Flyer:

- <https://assets.srhd.org/assets/media/documents/ABCD-Welcome-Flyer.pdf>

Access to Baby & Child Dentistry (ABCD) Program Spokane County Dentist List by Zip Code:

- <https://assets.srhd.org/assets/media/documents/ABCDDentalListZipCode.pdf>