



Spokane Head Start/Early Head Start 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 can 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 toothbrushing 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://srhd.org/media/documents/ABCD-Welcome-Flyer.pdf>

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

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