

## Why Dietary Fluoride Supplements?

Dietary fluoride supplements are available by prescription only. Physicians and dentists prescribe dietary fluoride supplements for infants and children who are not served by optimally fluoridated water. When prescribed and used properly, fluoride supplements are an effective alternative when water fluoridation is not possible. Dietary fluoride supplements are available in two forms: drops for infants over six months of age and chewable tablets for children and adolescents.

### Dietary Fluoride Supplement Schedule 1994

Approved by the American Dental Association  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

<b>Age</b>	<b>Fluoride ion level in drinking water (ppm)*</b>		
	<0.3 ppm	0.3-0.6 ppm	>0.6 ppm
Birth - 6 months	None	None	None
6 months -3 years	0.25 mg/day**	None	None
3 - 6 years	0.50 mg/day	0.25 mg/day	None
6 - 16 years	1.0 mg/day	0.50 mg/day	None

\* 1.0 part per million (ppm) = 1 milligram/liter (mg/L)

\*\* 2.2 mg sodium fluoride contains 1 mg fluoride ion.

### Important Considerations For Dentists and Physicians Prescribing Fluoride Supplements

The prevention of dental caries by prescribing the appropriate dosage of fluoride in supplement form presents some challenges for the health professional. The following factors should be taken into consideration in order to determine the proper dosage:

- All sources of fluoride must be evaluated with a thorough fluoride history (drinking water at home and school, other beverages, foods, topical fluorides). See this website for fluoridation status of community water systems in Ohio.
- If fluoride level is unknown, drinking water must be tested for fluoride content before supplements are prescribed. For [testing of fluoride content](#), contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture Lab, the nearest local water treatment plant that analyzes fluoride content or your local health department. Exposure to multiple water sources can make proper prescribing complex.
- Ingestion of higher than recommended levels of fluoride by young children has been associated with an increase in dental fluorosis, primarily very mild and mild, in developing unerupted teeth. Mild fluorosis is characterized by white opaque "spots" or areas that involve less than 50 percent of the tooth surface.
- Fluoride supplements require long-term compliance on a daily basis.