

Protecting and improving
the nation's health



**Let's talk
about water
fluoridation**

Why do we need water fluoridation?

- research shows that water fluoridation can reduce tooth decay and related hospital admissions
- tooth decay is the most common reason 6 to 10-year olds are admitted to hospital
- tooth decay is painful and can stop you eating, sleeping and socialising

What is water fluoridation?

- water fluoridation adjusts the level of fluoride in tap water to prevent tooth decay
- most water supplies already contain some fluoride, but not all have enough to help prevent tooth decay
- water has been fluoridated in England for over 50 years, 6 million people drink it

Fluoridation scheme

Naturally occurring fluoride level >0.5mg/l





**Consultation
page**



Water fluoridation reduces tooth decay

- if 5-year olds with the most tooth decay drank fluoridated water they would:
 - have 25% less tooth decay;
 - be 57-63% less likely to need teeth removed in hospital
- research shows that both children and adults benefit from water fluoridation

Water fluoridation is safe

- there is no convincing evidence that water fluoridation poses any health risks
- we know it's safe
- water quality is carefully assessed by the Drinking Water Inspectorate

Dental fluorosis

- dental fluorosis can occur if a child's teeth are exposed to too much fluoride when they're developing. Mild dental fluorosis appears as very fine white lines or flecks on teeth
- surveys of children and young people living in fluoridated and non-fluoridated cities found no difference in their opinions when they were asked about the appearance of their teeth

Water fluoridation can be cost saving

- water fluoridation can save money spent on the treatment of tooth decay



Who makes decisions about water fluoridation?

The Health and Care Act 2022 provides powers for the Secretary of State to introduce, vary and terminate community water fluoridation schemes.

Before using these powers, public consultation is required

The government is seeking views on expanding community water fluoridation schemes in the north east

This consultation closes at
11:59pm on 17 June 2024

[www.gov.uk/government/consultations/
community-water-fluoridation-expansion-in-
the-north-east-of-england](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/community-water-fluoridation-expansion-in-the-north-east-of-england)

