



ACTS to share with patients who ask about **fluoride use in adults.**

Some patients may have questions about the use of fluoride in their oral care products. As there are myths online that can be confusing, here are a sample of questions you may hear with fact-based responses to empower your patients' choices.

Q: Why do you recommend a toothpaste or mouthwash with fluoride?



FACT: Fluoride plays a critical role in strengthening the ability of our teeth to fight off the effects of decay.

Fluoride in toothpaste has the highest possible grade of evidence and support from almost all reliable health organisations across the world, including the World Health Organisation (WHO).

A recent systematic review by the established Cochrane organisation showed that fluoride-containing toothpastes reduce the development of decay by 24%.¹

Q: I read online that fluoride is toxic and poisonous.
Do you think fluoride is safe?



FACT: The safety of fluoride is emphasised by dental and medical associations world-wide, including the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Fluoride toothpaste has an excellent safety record going back over 50 years. It has been used safely by hundreds of millions of people around the world.

Dental and medical organisations around the world such as the Centers for Disease Control and New Zealand Dental Association strongly back its use.

Q: What does fluoride do to the teeth to protect against cavities?
I would rather reduce sugar in my diet to prevent cavities.



FACT: Fluoride is added to toothpastes because it has been found to be beneficial in strengthening tooth surfaces and preventing dental cavities.

Sugars are in almost everything we eat – not just snacks and drinks, but also in a balanced diet of fruits and vegetables.

When we eat sugar, the bacteria living on our teeth use this sugar to grow and multiply. A thick layer of bacteria (plaque) forms on the tooth surface and produces acids that attack our teeth and cause cavities.

Fluoride strengthens the tooth and repairs the damage caused by sugar acid attacks, reverses early decay and prevents further cavities. Fluoride also supports the saliva's natural ability to repair the tooth in-between sugar acid attacks.

For more information about fluoride toothpastes, please visit:
acffglobal.org/for-professionals/reference-materials/fluoride-toothpaste/

Q: Can you recommend me a natural, fluoride-free alternative?



FACT: Fluoride is a natural mineral found in food, plants, air and water.

Fluoride-based oral care products are the gold standard for preventing cavities in adults and children. Fluoridated toothpaste and mouthrinses help strengthen our teeth against tooth decay.

Fluoride containing toothpaste is more effective in preventing tooth decay than non-fluoride toothpaste.

For more information about the use of fluoride in oral care,
please see the following:

Ministry of Health:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/guidelines-for-the-use-of-fluoride-nov09.pdf>

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