

Go With the Flow

[Dr. James Koonce] We have young children that come in that have to have 12, 15 teeth removed because of gross, rampant caries.

[Girl #1] I don't like cavities.

[Girl #2] I got two teeth pulled.

[Girl #3] Then they put me to sleep.

[Girl #1] Sometimes, they make my teeth hurt.

[Girl #2] I didn't want to go.

[Girl #3] And, then they started drilling in it.

[Announcer] CDC-TV presents . . . Health Matters.

[Dr. Jonathan Bates] We do know that children who have bad teeth are the ones who have the high rates of school absences. In fact, as I understand it, it's the leading cause of not making it to school.

[Dr. Joe Thompson] Everyone's affected by poor oral health. It starts in childhood and it progresses through adulthood. It causes kids to lose school days. It causes parents to miss work days. It causes insurance costs to go up.

[Dr. Jonathan Bates] Probably the greatest issue right now has to do with prevention of cavities because that's just a absolutely rampant problem in kids.

[Dr. Joe Thompson] From studies that our health department has done here in the state, we know that kids in communities that don't have fluoride have two times as many cavities as those in a community that does fluoride.

[Dr. Jonathan Bates] In our state, we have about two thirds of the state is fluoridated and the other third is not. And I was amazed to find out what a patchwork quilt we have of water supplies around here. It's not like two or three big water companies, there's like hundreds of them.

[Dr. William Bailey] Unfortunately, nationwide, community water fluoridation is not available for over a hundred million Americans.

[Dr. Herman Hurd] Higher number of dental-treatment procedures increase costs for the individual, as well as for the group or the employer, as well as the dental-insurance carrier.

[Dr. Bill Bailey] Water fluoridation strengthens teeth in two ways: for children, when their teeth are developing, and for people of all ages, when water fluoridation comes in direct contact with the surfaces of the teeth.

[Dr. Jonathan Bates] It's about a forty-to-one return on every dollar you pump into fluoridation means that you saved forty dollars worth of healthcare expenses.

[Sandra McCoy] I have a 13- and 16-year old, and they grew up in here in Forrest City, where here, we're on the fluoridated water system. They never had problems with their teeth.

[Dr. Don Perkins] I'm very enthusiastic about fluoride in the water supply, having seen first hand the difference that it makes in the amount of decay.

[Sandra McCoy] Seven years ago, I moved to the country where there's non-fluoridated water, and my 7-year old has had severe dental problems.

[Dr. Jonathan Bates] Probably the cleanest, simplest, cheapest thing in the world they can do is to fluoridate the water.

[Dr. Bill Bailey] For over sixty years, the safe and effective use of community water fluoridation has helped millions of Americans enjoy the benefits of healthier teeth.