Oral Health Tips

Bottled Water and Your Oral Health

On any given day, many of us turn to bottled water to help quench our thirst. On average, Americans drink approximately 28.3 gallons of bottled water per year. Although bottled water is portable and convenient, if you drink a lot of bottled water you may want to consider your flouride intake.

For the past 50 years, many U.S. communities have added fluoride to drinking water. As a result, the number of dental caries (tooth decay) declined sharply in those communities. Fluoride — whether it is applied topically through toothpastes or fluoride rinses, or ingested through drinking water — helps prevent cavities by neutralizing the effects of the acids that cause decay.

However, more and more of us are drinking bottled rather than tap water. According to the International Bottled Water Association (IBWA), almost half of all Americans drink bottled water daily.

According to the IBWA, only about 13 U.S. bottlers sell fluoride-added water. Although the fluoride content of bottled water varies, many might not contain an adequate amount of fluoride to prevent tooth decay. This is especially important if your primary drinking water source is bottled water. Children and adults should be certain to get adequate amounts of fluoride, as it helps ward off tooth decay throughout your lifetime. In addition, fluoride helps prevent decay on the roots of your teeth, which is especially problematic for adults who experience receding gums.

Protect You and Your Family's Oral Health

If you are concerned about fluoride intake — either yours or that of your family — talk to your dentist. In addition to getting the right amount of fluoride, remember these key components to protecting your family's oral health:

• Brush and floss every day

• Eat a balanced, nutritional diet

• Make regular dental visits

Source: International Bottled Water Association: www.bottledwater.org

For more oral health information, please visit our Web site at www.decare.com

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