

2010

MICHIGAN ORAL HEALTH COALITION

Issue Brief

Research

- Fluoridation is widely considered to be among the 10 best public health advances of the 20th century.
- Tooth decay is an infectious, communicable disease and is almost entirely preventable.
- Based on current evidence, the American Association for Dental Research (AADR) strongly recommends, greater use of sealants by practitioners in private and public health practice.

About Us

Since 2004, the Michigan Oral Health Coalition has been a leader in the oral health access movement in Michigan. With more than 140 members--consumers, dentists, hygienists and dental assistants as well as universities, community health centers, dental benefit providers, professional associations and local health departments—we work together to improve the oral health of Michigan's residents.



Prevention

Prevention is crucial to improve and maintain oral health, as well as overall health for infants, children, adolescents and adults. Opportunities exist to expand prevention options including such public health strategies as community water fluoridation and dental sealants.

FLUORIDATION FACTS

- Nearly 7 million Michigan residents are served by community water systems with fluoride.
- The cost of community water fluoridation (about 72 cents per person per year) is less than having one cavity treated over a person's lifetime.
- Water fluoridation reduces or eliminates disparities in preventing dental caries among different socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
- Both the Environmental Protection Act and the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act set standards for the proper amount of fluoride added to our community water supplies.

SEALANTS FACTS

- Only 23.3% of 3rd grade children in Michigan had sealants present on first molar teeth, ranking Michigan in the bottom quartile of the nation in lack of a dental sealant program.
- Frequent consumption of beverages or foods high in sugar increases the risk for tooth decay. A 12-ounce can of soda contains approximately 12 teaspoons of sugar.
- School-based dental sealant programs frequently target schools in which at least 50 percent of students are eligible for USDA's free and reduced-price meals.
- Michigan has 58% of children with caries experience in their primary or permanent teeth, age 6-8, while the U.S. has 52%.
- Nearly one in ten 3rd grade children in Michigan have immediate dental care needs with signs or symptoms of pain, infection or swelling.