

Mother's Confusion due to Receiving False Information about Fluoride

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Using fluoride supplements as preventive dentistry is very common all around the world. They are applied as a topical gel (like Varnish Fluoride) or mouthwash for caries management. The implementation of community water fluoridation is another way to prevent the prevalence of dental caries. It can be acknowledged Fluoride is one of the most important elements that have a great effect on the reduction of tooth decay.

Although the safety of fluoride has been discussed in many articles and its benefits are obvious to all dentists and the dental community, unfortunately, many mothers are confused by misinformation that may affect the health of their children's teeth.

In studies in Sepideh Dental Clinic and Apple Dental Clinic, Dr. Karimi conducted a brief study on referred pediatric patients. After two courses of fluoride therapy at intervals of 6 months and encouraging the patients to keep good oral hygiene, he observed a significant reduction in the number of dental caries in two series of follow-up visits [1].

According to a study published in *JAMA Network Open*, the authors of this article believe that mothers often receive conflicting information about the use of fluoride and would have difficulties making decisions about their children's dental health [2].

Dr. Jacqueline Burgette wrote: "Health decisions can become confusing when legitimate concerns are influenced by misinformation" [2]. In this survey, some of the parents had sought professional opinions but some mothers received information about fluoride from family members that led them to false information. Some parents had even the impression that fluoride can cause cancer or other diseases.

The study had shortcomings. It was focused on mothers in areas without population diversity. Moreover, the mothers were not asked about information learned from social media.

Although the use of fluoride toothpaste is mandatory to manage tooth decay at home, it should also raise the awareness of children and especially their parents about the importance of fluoride in dental health. Therefore, in addition to dentists advising parents about fluoride, a reliable source should be provided by dentists to provide accurate information about fluoride.

However, fluoride can be effective on young children's teeth, keeping good oral hygiene and control of the sugar diet at early age should be considered by parents. Parents should know applying fluoride merely does not guarantee a caries-free mouth. Transferring the knowledge is one of the tasks of pediatric dentists to give accurate information about the effectiveness of Fluoride to parents to prevent confusion.

Bibliography

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