

# FLUORIDE: THE GREAT DEBATE

Sydney Morning Herald. 2nd May, 2002.

## Fluoride: yes or no?

Since being raised by the State Government earlier this year, the question of whether Ballarat's water supply should be fluoridated has been the subject of intense community debate. The Courier today presents statements for and against from the Australian Dental Association and the Victorian Anti-fluoridation Association.

### **The case against Freedom of Choice:**

#### **Why the population should be compelled to take hydrofluorosilicic Acid via artificial fluoridation.**

Local leader: Dr Anne Stewart is president of the Mid West Branch of the Australian Dental Association.

- This article was compiled from a statement prepared by the Victorian branch of the Australian Dental Association

At a recent celebration to mark the 25th anniversary of fluoridation of Melbourne's water supply, Sir Rupert Hamer, who was Premier at the time, remarked that fluoridation was one of his government's proudest achievements.

Since 1977, decay has been substantially reduced in children who live in Melbourne.

In the 1950s and 1960s the average Australian teenager has as many holes and fillings as years of age.

There are many adults over 40 in Ballarat who have a legacy from this time in the form of dentures, gaps and ear-to-ear fillings requiring on-going maintenance.

More than 100 studies in 20 countries (including Australia) have shown a dramatic reduction in decay rates when water is fluoridated.

But even in unfluoridated Ballarat, dental health has improved somewhat over the last 25 years due to the use of fluoridated toothpastes and the consumption of fluoridated food and drinks manufactured or processed in fluoridated areas.

However, decay rates in Ballarat, especially in pockets of socio-economic disadvantage, are still about 30 per cent higher than in Melbourne.

This is most evident in the public dental clinics, where double the number of general anaesthetics for preschoolers are needed compared with Melbourne clinics.

Fluoridation is one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century according to the United States Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

What makes it especially good is that it requires no conscious effort on the part of the beneficiaries and is especially effective in the lower socio-economic groups.

Fluoride is a naturally-occurring element found in rocks, soil, water, plants animals and humans.

The optimal level of fluoride for oral health is around one part per million, but not all areas have this amount in their water.

Fluoridation is the adjustment of the amount of fluoride already in our water.

It is one of the great natural health remedies.

In Australia, between 1964 and 1977, all capital cities except Brisbane, were fluoridated.

About 12 million people now use fluoridated water in Australia.

Parts of the United States have been fluoridated for more than 50 years and world-wide 360 million people in 60 countries benefit from fluoridated water.

Fluoridation has the unqualified support of major health bodies such as National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian and American Medical Associations and the World Health Organisation.

Fifty years has established the safety and effectiveness of fluoridation. Do we need to wait another 50 years before Ballarat too, experiences the benefits?

The community should not be asking are we entitled to impose fluoridation on unwilling people, but rather, are the anti-fluoridationists entitled to impose the risks, damage and cost of failure to fluoridate on the community at large?

## **The case for Freedom of Choice:**

### **Why only individuals have the right to decide if they or their families take drugs:**

Ballarat experience: Chairman of the Anti-Fluoridation Association of Victoria Glen Walker.

- This article was written by the chairman of the Anti-Fluoridation Association of Victoria Glen Walker

THE platform of this association is freedom of choice in medication as per the Australian constitution.

The law in Australia is that no doctor is permitted to force any medication on any person against their will.

Compulsory fluoridation has never been scientifically proven safe and data published in proper scientific journals.

The sodium silico-fluoride chemical used in fluoridation plants has never been registered as a safe chemical as required by all other drugs in the world.

World scientific literature from the highest authorities state fluoridated water does not stop dental decay.

Examples are that since fluoridation in Australia there has been an increase of 80 per cent more dentists plus hundreds of dental nurses, dental hygienists, dental therapists and each fluoridated capital city, including Melbourne, building a new larger dental hospital.

e then have the situation of the Victorian Government Health Department displaying posters outside dentists rooms stating: "there is a better way", have your children's teeth protected against decay with sealants on the teeth.

Not much of an endorsement for fluoridation.

Just last week Professor Eric Reynolds of the Melbourne University Dental School, the house of fluoridation, was awarded the Clunes Ross National Scientific and Technology Award for his research into dental decay and his discovery and production of a "multi-based compound to protect and repair teeth".

This research started about 15 years ago at Melbourne University Dental School that was the centrepiece of fluoridation promotion at that time.

The highest health authority in Australia, the National Health and Medical Research Council, stated in their book on fluoridation that there is a current dearth of dental data in Australia and yet the Victorian Health Minister makes public statements on fluoridation quite contrary to the NHMRC who also said there are no Australian Reports that permit the NHMRC to precisely estimate the current intake of fluoride which is being stored in Australian skeletons.

Australian people are not told that Brisbane childrens' teeth are just as good as Melbourne children, but Brisbane was never fluoridated.

Brisbane has a fluoridation inquiry each year, the committee was made up mainly with dentists and doctors. Their result was no recommendation to fluoridate Brisbane drinking water supplies.

The blinkered pushers of fluoridation try to keep from the public that their failed fluoridation concept is only used by four per cent of world population and that four per cent only by political compulsion even in democratic countries like Australia.

Ballarat people must be aware about statements that Ballarat childrens' teeth are worse than Melbourne and is based on unacceptable scientific statistical data in which it is professionally unacceptable (indeed dishonest) to compare dissimilar cities as stated by Dr Carr, Federal Dental Health, Canberra.

The ploy by dentists in Victoria is to compare Melbourne children with different country communities, a professional blunder not in the real interest of democratic principles or professional behaviour.

If Ballarat is fluoridated the community should know the well-kept secret that mothers with bottle fed children must not mix baby formula foods with fluoridated tap water. That gives the baby a dangerous toxic overdose of fluoride. *The Courier* will tell you but not the dental profession nor the Victorian Government.

When I was a boy living in Ballarat we sang a song at school using the original spelling BALLAARAT, some "body", changed the spelling - please do not allow them to now change your water supply by introducing a toxic waste by-product that has no scientific evidence of being safe but voluminous published studies showing its real toxicity.