

Kidney Foundation Drops Fluoridation Support

Fluoride may damage bones of kidney patients

NEW YORK, June 9 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The National Kidney Foundation withdrew its support of water fluoridation citing the 2006 National Research Council (NRC) report indicating that kidney patients are more susceptible to fluoride's bone and teeth-damaging effects.

The kidney-impaired retain more fluoride and risk skeletal fluorosis (an arthritic-type bone disease), fractures and severe enamel fluorosis, which may increase the risk of dental decay, reports the NRC.

Fluoride is added to US water supplies ostensibly to reduce tooth decay. Fluoride is also in foods, beverages, drugs and dental products.

The National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) former fluoridation position statement also carried surprising cautions. The NKF advised monitoring children's fluoride intake along with patients with chronic kidney impairment, those with excessive fluoride intake, and those with prolonged disease. But NKF now admits, "exposure from food and beverages is difficult to monitor, since FDA food labels do not quantify fluoride content."

The NKF's April 15, 2008 statement goes further: "Individuals with CKD [Chronic Kidney Disease] should be notified of the potential risk of fluoride exposure."

"More than 20 million Americans have CKD, and most don't even know it. More than 20 million others are at increased risk for developing CKD," NKF reports.

"There is consistent evidence that impairment of kidney function results in changes to the way in which fluoride is metabolized and eliminated from the body, resulting in an increased burden of fluoride," concludes Kidney Health Australia in a paper NKF recommends reading.

NKF's fluoridation support was dropped when a lawyer, an academic dentist and public health professional, Daniel Stockin, alerted it to NRC's findings.

"An easy way to reduce the uncontrolled flow of fluoride into our bodies is to stop water fluoridation," says attorney Paul Beeber, President, New York State Coalition Opposed to Fluoridation. "But it takes political will to reject fluoridation."

The American and Louisiana Dental Associations erroneously claim the National Kidney Foundation supports fluoridation. However, even the ADA reports that "decreased fluoride removal may occur among persons with severely impaired kidney function who may not be on kidney dialysis."

Chronic kidney disease is a growing health problem in the United States occurring more often in African-American populations, says the Centers for Disease Control.