

Scientists urge lower limits on fluoride

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Some scientists are reportedly urging federal limits on fluoride in drinking water be lowered.

The scientists say high levels of naturally occurring fluoride in drinking water are leaving some children at risk of tooth enamel damage and adults prone to weakened bones that could lead to fractures, The Los Angeles Times reported Thursday.

Many cities with low levels of naturally occurring fluoride add it to their water supplies to protect against tooth decay. Those cities, said the panel, are unaffected by the new findings because their levels of fluoride are much lower than the federal standard.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requested the panel from the National Academy of Sciences examine the EPA's standard that allows 4 parts per million of fluoride in drinking water supplies.

The panel found about 200,000 Americans have drinking water with fluoride concentrations at or above the EPA's limit, while approximately two-thirds of U.S. citizens -- 62 million people -- drink water in which fluoride concentrations are much less than the amount the panel found resulted in adverse health effects.

The scientists found about 2 ppm seems to protect most people from the health problems, The Times said.

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