



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on July 29, 2012

Fluoride Lowers IQ in Kids, New Study Shows

A review of some two dozen studies by Harvard University researchers [published](#) this month in a peer-reviewed federal journal suggests that fluoride added into water supplies “significantly” decreases the IQ of children, leading to renewed calls by activists to end the controversial practice of fluoridation. Most public water supplies in the United States still have the chemical added in by authorities under the guise of preventing tooth decay.



“The children in high fluoride areas had significantly lower IQ than those who lived in low fluoride areas,” [noted](#) the Harvard research scientists about the results of their study, echoing claims by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that there is substantial evidence of developmental neurotoxicity associated with the chemical. “The results support the possibility of an adverse effect of high fluoride exposure on children’s neurodevelopment.”

The researchers also expressed concerns about the potential of fluoride to cause irreversible brain damage in unborn children. “Fluoride readily crosses the placenta,” they observed. “Fluoride exposure to the developing brain, which is much more susceptible to injury caused by toxicants than is the mature brain, may possibly lead to damage of a permanent nature.”

The study, which was published on July 20 in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives* of the U.S. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, also called for further studies on the issue. While fluoride may cause neurotoxicity in animals and adults, not enough was known about the chemical’s effects on the neurodevelopment of children, the researchers said.

“Fluoride seems to fit in with lead, mercury, and other poisons that cause chemical brain drain,” [noted](#) senior study author Philippe Grandjean, a professor of environmental health at Harvard. “The effect of each toxicant may seem small, but the combined damage on a population scale can be serious, especially because the brain power of the next generation is crucial to all of us.”

Of course, the latest study is hardly the first to document the toxic effects of fluoride on the human brain. Even recently, after some [two dozen studies](#) documented the problem, scientists and experts spoke out about the dangers of fluoridation.

“In this study we found a significant dose-response relation between fluoride level in serum and children’s IQ,” observed Fluoride Action Network director Paul Connett, Ph.D., after a previous study was released showing the same effects. “This is the 24th study that has found this association, but this study is stronger than the rest.”

Numerous other studies, including a [2006 report](#) by the U.S. National Academy of Science, have concluded that fluoride affects brain function and can cause other health problems. Most of the research so far, however, has been conducted abroad — much of it in countries without government fluoridation of public water supplies.

In the United States, authorities have been fluoridating the water for decades, and very few proper



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investigations have studied its potential effects — especially on the developing minds of children. But opposition to the practice is growing quickly, with each new study adding fuel to the fire.

A broad coalition of American attorneys, doctors, dentists, and activists has long demanded that authorities stop adding fluoride to the public's drinking water. And like other recent studies highlighting the myriad dangers, the latest research — especially because it was published in a federal journal — has already been seized on by opponents of water fluoridation.

“It's senseless to keep subjecting our children to this ongoing fluoridation experiment to satisfy the political agenda of special-interest groups,” [said](#) attorney Paul Beeber, president of the New York State Coalition Opposed to Fluoridation. “Even if fluoridation reduced cavities, is tooth health more important than brain health? It's time to put politics aside and stop artificial fluoridation everywhere.”

Alleged dental benefits aside, other critics of water fluoridation oppose the controversial practice in principle, pointing out that instead of being used to purify the water supply, it is added to treat people in what amounts to the mass-medication of populations without lawfully required individual consent. Some experts even challenge the supposed usefulness of fluoride in preventing cavities.

As evidence about the dangers of fluoridation continues to build, however, communities across America have been debating whether or not to stop medicating people through the water supply. More than a few municipal governments have already stopped the controversial practice altogether. But as analysts have noted, officials and much of the mainstream medical establishment have tended to ignore the growing amount of research exposing the toxicity of fluoride.

“Will the latest Harvard-backed study be ignored by major public health organizations, or will serious change be initiated?” [wondered](#) Natural Society's Anthony Gucciardi, citing decades-old evidence that the toxic chemical leads to a wide array of health problems including brain damage, accelerated tumor growth, and even death. “This should come as no surprise to those who have followed fluoride research over the past several years.”

The most recent study on fluoride relied on more than two dozen previous studies documenting the effects of the chemical on the brains. Researchers concluded that future investigations should examine information on exposure by unborn children and neurobehavioral performance.

Activists hope the latest research may be the beginning of the end for proponents of mass medicating Americans through the water supply. However, considering the vast amount of research already available that has been largely overlooked or even concealed by public health authorities, it remains unclear whether any significant reforms will be forthcoming.

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