



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on May 22, 2014

Top Medical Journal Labels Fluoride a Neurotoxin

Most Americans drink fluoride every day as part of what critics refer to as an involuntary mass-medication program. Organized dentistry argues that it is good for children's teeth. However, according to a recent report in one of the world's most prestigious medical journals, the industrial chemical added to water supplies across much of the United States is actually a dangerous developmental neurotoxicant.



Echoing the recent findings of [another Harvard study suggesting that fluoride is associated with drastic reductions in the IQ of children](#), *The Lancet* journal report [classified the chemical as a harmful neurotoxin](#). That puts it right alongside lead, mercury, arsenic, and other dangerous substances, the authors said, warning of the potentially far-reaching consequences.

"A meta-analysis of 27 cross-sectional studies of children exposed to fluoride in drinking water, mainly from China, suggests an average IQ decrement of about seven points in children exposed to raised fluoride concentrations," noted the authors, Dr. Philippe Grandjean of the Harvard School of Public Health and Dr. Philip Landrigan of New York's Icahn School of Medicine.

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The level of fluoride analyzed in most of the studies was less than four milligrams per liter, according to media reports. Under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rules surrounding water fluoridation, municipal governments are allowed to use more than the concentrations cited in the study, meaning American kids could be suffering even more serious neurological complications from exposure to the chemical.

"Our very great concern is that children worldwide are being exposed to unrecognized toxic chemicals that are silently eroding intelligence, disrupting behaviors, truncating future achievements and damaging societies, perhaps most seriously in developing countries," added the authors, warning of numerous problems associated with exposure to such substances including autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and other learning disabilities.

In *The Lancet Neurology*, the two public health experts noted that in 2006, they performed a systematic review that identified five industrial chemicals as "developmental neurotoxicants." Those included lead, methyl mercury, arsenic, toluene, and polychlorinated biphenyls. Since then, they said, epidemiological studies had documented another six: fluoride, manganese, chlorpyrifos, dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, tetrachloroethylene, and the polybrominated diphenyl ethers.

"Fluoride seems to fit in with lead, mercury, and other poisons that cause chemical brain drain," [explained](#) Harvard's Dr. Grandjean. "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."

There is "strong evidence" that exposure to those chemicals, which are found in a broad array of products, is linked to increases in brain development disorders, the authors said. Already, such



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disorders affect an estimated one in six children. According to the review, it is time to take action, including testing existing industrial chemicals as well as new ones for potential problems. Billions of dollars could be saved, they added.

Opponents of fluoride being added to the water and of involuntary mass-medication of the public, meanwhile, seized on the findings to push for an end to water fluoridation entirely. “In light of the new classification of fluoride as a dangerous neurotoxin, adding more fluoride to Americans’ already excessive intake no longer has any conceivable justification,” said Fluoride Action Network Executive Director and retired chemistry professor Dr. Paul Connett in a statement. “We should follow the evidence and try to reduce fluoride intake, not increase it.”

At least one national organization, [The John Birch Society](#), has been against adding fluoride to water supplies since the 1950s. In 1992, libertarian icon Murray Rothbard wrote a [scathing critique of the practice](#) that appeared in this magazine, a JBS affiliate, attacking fluoridation from multiple angles. “Compulsory mass medication is medically evil, as well as socialistic,” he said.

Though it was never a primary campaign of the JBS, the establishment and its apparatchiks in the press seized upon the opposition to fluoridation using Alinsky-style tactics in a half-baked effort to demonize the constitutionalist organization and scientific critics of adding fluoride to water supplies. Medical professionals and scientists opposed to the practice were often slandered as “quacks,” too.

Probably the most well-known and impactful attack on critics came from the 1964 film *Dr. Strangelove*. It did not mention the JBS by name, but the film sought to ridicule opponents of fluoridation as anti-communist zealots. Watch the relevant clip below:

While also citing various health concerns over the decades, the primary reason The John Birch Society was and remains opposed to public water fluoridation is the forced-medication implications of the practice. Consider, for instance, that since adding fluoride to water supplies became widespread and generally accepted, multiple self-appointed population-control gurus have proposed adding birth control to the water as well.

Perhaps the most prominent of the bunch: Current White House “Science” Czar John Holdren. “Adding a sterilant to drinking water or staple foods is a suggestion that seems to horrify people more than most proposals for involuntary fertility control,” Obama’s czar explained in his book *Ecoscience*, which also proposed forced abortions and a planetary regime to control resources. “To be acceptable, such a substance would have to meet some rather stiff requirements.”

In an e-mail to this writer, John F. McManus, the president of The John Birch Society as well as publisher of *The New American*, elaborated on the organization’s long opposition to medicating the public via water. “Yes, JBS protested adding fluoride to the water, not so much because of the medical consequences (JBS isn’t a medical organization) but because of freedom issues,” he explained. “We pointed out that chlorine treats the water (which we accepted) but fluoride treats the people (which we never accepted).”

“Our attitude was simple: If you want fluoride in your water, go get some and add it, but don’t force me — or have government force me — to take what I don’t want,” McManus said.

During the uproar over the practice, McManus continued, he received a call from a journalist for the establishment media who wondered whether it was true that The John Birch Society believed fluoridation to be a “communist plot.” “I told her it was a communist tactic to treat everyone as part of



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the ‘masses’ and that this type of thinking could easily be found among the fluoride promoters,” he said. “It was obvious to me that another slam against JBS was being prepared.”

McManus told the journalist that a professor from Tufts University, physiology professor Dr. Melvin Ketchel, had recently urged the addition of birth-control substances to public water supplies in a supposed bid to fight “overpopulation.” The JBS leader faxed over an article about the professor’s statements to the journalist. But “JBS opposition to fluoride in the water supply wasn’t mentioned by the magazine,” McManus said.

Today, scientific evidence surrounding the dangers of fluoride continues to grow — most recently with *The Lancet* report. Separately, as *The New American* [reported in 2012](#), a study published in the *Environmental Health Perspectives* journal of the U.S. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences by Harvard researchers also found major risks to brain development associated with the chemical. The young are especially susceptible, the research suggests.

“The children in high fluoride areas had significantly lower IQ than those who lived in low fluoride areas,” noted the Harvard scientists about the results of their study, echoing statements by the Environmental Protection Agency 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.”

Fluoride also crosses the placenta and could cause irreversible damage in unborn children, the authors explained. “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,” they said. Some experts have criticized the study, but it still sent shockwaves through the medical community.

As evidence of the dangers grows, demands to halt water fluoridation are again getting louder. Last year, for example, despite an extremely well-funded campaign to fluoridate public water in Portland, Oregon, [voters overwhelmingly rejected the scheme for the fourth time since the 1950s](#). Most recently the fluoride battle has flared up in Dallas, Texas. Since 2009, though, estimates suggest that over 125 communities across the United States — from Florida to California — have ended the controversial practice.

Regardless of the alleged benefits or dangers of fluoride, though, the most troubling issue surrounding the practice remains the forced mass-medication of the public. Of course, those who want the chemical would still be able to get it — and outside of the water supply, it can actually be delivered in controlled doses tailored to each individual as appropriate. However, liberty-minded critics say medicating people without their consent is a fundamental violation of human rights, and as such, must be halted as soon as possible.

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