

Metabolic Solutions Info Report

Terry Chamberlin

RR1 Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia B0S 1M0

msibio@yahoo.com

902-584-3810

Toothpaste and Other Fluoride Sources Can Damage Preschoolers' Teeth

Journal of the American Dental Association 2000;131:746-754.

Overusing toothpaste or other sources of fluoride in very young children can be quite detrimental.

Intake of excess fluoride--whether through toothpaste, fluoridated water, fluoride supplements, or a combination of these--can cause a condition in children known as dental fluorosis, which results in an unsightly discoloration of the teeth. While fluorosis can be treated by bleaching the teeth, the best method is to avoid the condition in the first place.

The condition is particularly a problem in children under age 6, whose permanent teeth are developing even though they have not yet erupted through the gums.

For the children from non-fluoridated areas, most fluorosis is attributable to excess fluoride supplement use, brushing more than once a day with a fluoride toothpaste during the first 2 years of life, and using more than a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.

Additionally, these children were born prior to 1994, when guidelines for fluoride supplementation were higher, which means that rates of fluorosis could be increasing further.