

# Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program



## Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program

Since 1979, New Brunswick has had a free Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program for elementary school students. The program is a safe and very effective way of preventing tooth decay in children.

### How does the program work?

- Each child who participates in the program rinses with a 0.2% neutral sodium fluoride mouth rinse once a week.
- Teachers or volunteers prepare the fluoride mouth rinse solution.
- Students are given 10 mL (2tsp) of the fluoride mouth rinse solution in a paper cup.
- Under supervision, students rinse with the solution for one minute and then spit it out into the paper cup.
- Students do not swallow the mouth rinse solution.
- It takes less than 5 minutes of class time per week.

### Parental Consent

All that is required for a child to participate is parental consent. Parents must sign and return the consent form to the child's school before the child is permitted to participate.

## Why should my child participate in the program?

Tooth decay is the most common childhood disease. Having healthy teeth is important for your child's growth, development and self-esteem. Rinsing with fluoride mouth rinse is simple, safe and takes very little classroom time. Participation in this program is voluntary, and there is no cost for your child to take part.

### How does fluoride work?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring element that helps prevent tooth decay. When we eat, the bacteria living in our mouth produce acid. That acid attacks the outer layer of the tooth called the enamel. This can lead to tooth decay. Fluoride makes tooth enamel stronger and interferes with the bacteria's ability to produce acid.

### Advantages of the program

The weekly fluoride mouth rinse strengthens the tooth enamel. It is a supplement to other good dental health habits such as regular brushing, flossing, and annual dental check-ups. Fluoride mouth rinse helps to reduce cavities by giving your child's teeth extra protection against tooth decay. Toothpaste is also an important source of fluoride. Talk to your dentist about any concerns you may have about fluoride for your child.