

February 15, 2001

Commissioner Jane E. Henny, M.D.
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch
5630 Fischers Lane, Room 1061-HFA-305
Rockville, Maryland 20857

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Dear Doctor Henny:

I don't personally know Assemblyman John Kelly, or of his accomplishments in office, but today, he is my hero.

His articulate and sensible petition regarding the removal of fluoride supplements (Petition docket number 00P-1602/CP 1, dated 11/6/00) merits more than cursory review from the FDA.

I'm not a casual bystander to the fluoride mess in America; I am an unintended casualty of this wrongfully prescribed "medicine." Please read my story.

I live in San Diego, California, which is currently being considered for compulsory fluoridation of our precious water supplies. I am a (relatively) healthy, 49 year old male. About ten years ago (upon the recommendation of my dentist's staff), I switched my filtered bottled water supply to fluoridated bottled water. Our active family of four consumed between five to ten gallons per week. In addition, my two children were prescribed fluoride tablets. Within the first year of drinking this, I noticed our youngest son's teeth develop a light, patchy mottling. The dental hygienist dismissed it as nothing (at the time, I had no idea that fluoride caused this). After five years, something happened to me. It was gradual, but noticeable within a period of a couple months: I felt sluggish, unable to concentrate, and a "fog" descended on my mental faculties. The symptoms did not disappear, so I went to my family doctor. Unable to diagnose a problem, he referred me to a neuropsychologist. She immediately ordered a blood test, and lo and behold, my TSH levels were 4 to 5 times normal. Recognizing these as hypothyroid symptoms, I was directed to start taking small daily doses of Synthroid.

Most of the symptoms vanished, but there was a lingering sensation of "the fog." It was bothersome, but my routine was basically back to normal. During this whole time, our family kept drinking this fluoride concoction. Of course, I was troubled by my defective thyroid, and not getting an answer from anyone in the medical profession as to the cause. I set out to research this myself.

It took time, but documented correlations about thyroid function and its suppression by fluoride began to lighten my "dim" bulb. In early 1998, I discontinued the fluoridated bottled water altogether, and installed two filters on my tap. Some time thereafter, I also stopped drinking tea (which has been shown to contain trace amounts of fluoride). Eventually, the bulb shone brightly again, and the fog almost completely lifted (my son's mottling wasn't a serious problem; it mostly affected his baby teeth, and we only used the prescription for fluoride tablets for about a year). I just hope there aren't other problems that could arise later in my children).

I suspect fluoride and iodine got mixed up for the proper function of my thyroid, and my thyroid went kaput. My doctor even corroborated this likelihood (he happily noted he minored in chemistry), but didn't seem very interested. His only comment was fluoride probably works well when topically applied in toothpaste. Maybe he's right. As far as ingesting it as a pill or in water or food, I'm convinced it is one big mistake that has been going on too long in this country.

California and other states have made fluoridation policy mandated in many cases! Why are they forcing it down our throats? This seems to be an incredible waste of money: Targeted groups of children may only receive about half a percent of this mixture for drinking, but the remaining 99.5% ends up in our soils, our vegetable gardens, our foods, our waters, our oceans, and our bodies. When I decide to drink a 32-ounce Sprite from the soda fountain at the local Circle-K, I don't want to gulp down fluoride. When I decide to eat at a restaurant and order coffee or water, I don't want to consume fluoride. The examples go on and on.

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Many nations, such as Japan, China, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Sweden, and Denmark have either suspended or prohibited fluoridation of water. I think it's time the scientists, dentists, doctors, and politicians in our country got to the bottom of this.

I hope you find the following link useful:

<http://www.fluoridealert.org/>

Thank you for listening.

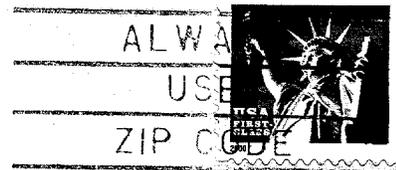
Sincerely,

Tom Owen

**Tom Owen
10723 Foxwood Road
San Diego, CA 92126**

**Cc: Dr. Jeffrey P. Koplan, MD MPH, Director, CDC
Christine Todd Whitman, EPA Administrator**

n
xwood Road
p, CA 92126



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