



## Collaborative Consensus

In the course of collecting information, you will hear assertions from two sources, and you should make a clear distinction between them. One source is self-proclaimed experts who are single-minded regarding this issue, who rely on their own interpretation of articles, and who quote selectively from what other individual scientists have said. The other source is drawn from reports prepared by teams of distinguished scientists, called panels of experts, who are selected on the basis of their expertise to look at all scientific sides of issues, and who debate the evidence and draft a final report and recommendations.

In recent years, it is this process, adopted by major health organizations such as the CDC, National Research Council, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), American Dental Association (ADA) and others that has tasked these expert panels to evaluate the risks, benefits and effectiveness of preventive and evidence-based strategies. We have high confidence in the evaluation of the science that occurs through such processes, whatever their findings might be. In the case of community water fluoridation, every such panel of experts that has met to review and critique the evidence has concluded that community water fluoridation is safe and effective.



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