



1700 Diagonal Road, Suite 650
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-647-4609
Fax: 703-683-4074
Web: www.bottledwater.org

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Reader's Editor – Daily Mail
Northcliffe House,
2 Derry Street
London, UK W8 5TT

corrections@mailonline.co.uk
news@dailymail.co.uk
editorial@dailymailonline.co.uk

Dear Reader's Editor,

I'm writing in regard to Natalie Rahhal's article "[Why your kids NEED tap water: Children who just drink bottled water to avoid lead-poisoning have drastically higher risk of tooth decay](#)," published on www.dailymail.com on November 27, 2017. We are concerned that this article misinforms your readers regarding the study's results and whether bottled water contains fluoride. We ask that you review the information provided below and update your article to more accurately reflect the facts about bottled water.

The article, particularly the headline, is patently false for two important reasons:

- It implies that bottled water does not contain fluoride. In fact, numerous bottled water products contain fluoride. Read more about bottled water and fluoride here: www.bottledwater.org/health/fluoride. And see a list of IBWA members that produce fluoridated water here: www.bottledwater.org/fluoride
- It draws a causation conclusion, when the research findings are really only associational. There is a big difference. Observational studies, which this one is, don't control variables so the results can only be associations. Whereas designed experiments have controlled variables and conclusions are based on causation. The study's introduction makes this clear saying: "This study's purpose is to determine whether non-consumption of tap water is **associated** with lower prevalence of elevated blood lead levels and higher prevalence of dental caries in children and adolescents." (Emphasis added.) Your story misrepresents the study by purporting a causal conclusion when this in fact is not the case. (Link to study: [www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(17\)30495-6/pdf](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(17)30495-6/pdf)).

Fluoride is present in many foods and beverages, and almost all toothpaste contains fluoride. Too much exposure to fluoride can lead to a condition called fluorosis, which results in stains to the teeth. Too little fluoride can cause an increase in dental caries, particularly in children. Consumers (and parents for their children) should therefore look at how much fluoride they are receiving as part of their overall diet and should contact a healthcare or dental-care provider for

their recommendation. Not all consumers want fluoride in their bottled water, but for those who do, as we mentioned above, multiple IBWA member [companies produce bottled water](#) with added fluoride.

You've probably heard by now that in 2016 bottled water outsold carbonated soft drinks (by volume) to become the No.1 packaged beverage in the United States. Americans are making great efforts to live a better lifestyle by choosing healthier foods and beverages, and drinking water – tap, bottled, or filtered – should be encouraged. With the high rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and lead-contaminated tap water in our on-the-go society, bottled water provides a safe, healthy, convenient beverage choice. Discouraging people from choosing this healthy drink option is not in the public interest.

Thank you for reading and giving my concerns your attention. I kindly ask that you update your online story to more accurately reflect the facts about bottled water.

Sincerely,

Jill Culora
Vice President of Communications
International Bottled Water Association