

Prominent researcher apologizes for pushing fluoride

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Why'd you do it, Doc? Why'd you toss the fluoride folks overboard?

I had just tracked down Dr. Hardy Limeback, B.Sc., Ph.D in Biochemistry, D.D.S., head of the Department of Preventive Dentistry for the University of Toronto, and president of the Canadian Association for Dental Research. (Whew.) Dr. Limeback is Canada's leading fluoride authority and, until recently, the country's primary promoter of the controversial additive.

In a surprising newsmaker interview this past April, Dr. Limeback announced a dramatic change of heart. "Children under three should never use fluoridated toothpaste," he counseled. "Or drink fluoridated water. And baby formula must never be made up using Toronto tap water. Never."

Why, I wondered? What could have caused such a powerful paradigm shift?

It's been building up for a couple of years, Limeback told me during a recent telephone interview. "But certainly the crowning blow was the realization that we have been dumping contaminated fluoride into water reservoirs for half a century. The vast majority of all fluoride additives come from Tampa Bay, Florida smokestack scrubbers. The additives are a toxic byproduct of the super-phosphate fertilizer industry."

Tragically, he continued, "that means we're not just dumping toxic fluoride into our drinking water. We're also exposing innocent, unsuspecting people to deadly elements of lead, arsenic and radium, all of them carcinogenic. Because of the cumulative properties of toxins, the detrimental effects on human health are catastrophic." A recent study at the University of Toronto confirmed Dr. Limeback's worst fears. "Residents of cities that fluoridate have double the fluoride in their hip bones vis-a-vis the balance of the population. Worse, we discovered that fluoride is actually altering the basic architecture of human bones."

Skeletal fluorosis is a debilitating condition that occurs when fluoride accumulates in bones, making them extremely weak and brittle. The earliest symptoms?

Mottled and brittle teeth, Dr. Limeback told me. "In Canada we are now spending more money treating dental fluorosis than we do treating cavities. That includes my own practice."

One of the most obvious living experiments today, Dr. Limeback believes, is a proof-positive comparison between any two Canadian cities. "Here in Toronto we've been fluoridating for 36 years. Yet Vancouver - which has never fluoridated - has a cavity rate lower than Toronto's."

And, he pointed out, cavity rates are low all across the industrialized world - including Europe, which is 98% fluoride free. Low because of improved standards of living, less refined sugar, regular dental checkups,

flossing and frequent brushing. Now less than 2 cavities per child Canada-wide, he said.

I don't get it, Doc. Last month, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) ran a puff piece all across America saying the stuff was better than sliced bread. What's the story?

Unfortunately, he replied, "the CDC is basing its position on data that is 50 years old, and questionable at best. Absolutely no one has done research on fluorosilicates, which is the junk they're dumping into the drinking water."

On the other hand, he added, "the evidence against systemic fluoride in-take continues to pour in."

But Doc, the dentists.

I have absolutely no training in toxicity, he stated firmly. "Your well-intentioned dentist is simply following 50 years of misinformation from public health and the dental association. Me, too. Unfortunately, we were wrong."

Last week, Dr. Hardy Limeback addressed his faculty and students at the University of Toronto, Department of Dentistry. In a poignant, memorable meeting, he apologized to those gathered before him.

Speaking as the head of preventive dentistry, I told them that I had unintentionally mislead my colleagues and my students. For the past 15 years, I had refused to study the toxicology information that is readily available to anyone. Poisoning our children was the furthest thing from my mind.

The truth, he confessed to me, "was a bitter pill to swallow. But swallow it I did."

South of the border, the paradigm shift has yet to dawn. After half a century of delusion, the CDC, American Dental Association and Public Health stubbornly and skillfully continue to manipulate public opinion in favor of fluoridation.

Meantime, study after study is delivering the death knell of the deadly toxin. Sure, fluoridation will be around for a long time yet, but ultimately its supporters need to ready the life rafts. The poisonous waters of doubt and confusion are bound to get choppy.

Are lawsuits inevitable? I asked the good doctor. "Remember tobacco," was his short, succinct reply.

Welcome, Dr. Hardy Limeback, to the far side of the fluoride equation.

It's lonely over here, but in our society loneliness and truth frequently travel hand in hand.

Thank you for the undeniable courage of your convictions.

Endnote: Christopher Bryson for his 2004 book 'The Fluoride Deception' also interviewed Dr Hardy Limeback: "You can get perfectly healthy teeth with resistant enamel without having any kind of fluoride exposure." ... Limeback no longer keeps fluoride toothpaste in his home.'