

Fluoride and Arthritis

"Arthritis and chronic joint symptoms affect...about **one of every three adults**, making it one of the most prevalent diseases in the United States. As the population ages, this number will increase dramatically."

Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Excessive exposure to fluoride causes an arthritic disease called [skeletal fluorosis](#).

Skeletal fluorosis, especially in its [early stages](#), is a [difficult disease to diagnose](#), and can be readily confused with various forms of arthritis including [osteoarthritis](#) and [rheumatoid arthritis](#).

The arthritic symptoms of fluorosis can occur before the onset of bone changes [detectable by x-ray](#), thereby making the early stages of fluorosis difficult to differentiate from arthritis.



Normal forearm X-ray showing smooth outer and inner surfaces of the bone

Forearm X-ray of a patient showing increase in bone density and calcification of the interosseous membrane

Photo: Forearm X-ray of patient showing increase in bone density and calcification of the interosseous membrane due to over-exposure of fluoride. Journal of the International Society for Fluoride Research: <http://www.fluorideresearch.org/forearm/files/forearm.pdf>

In the advanced stages of skeletal fluorosis, the spine may closely resemble the appearance of [spondylosis/spondylitis](#) and [DISH \(Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis\)](#).

Clinical Phase 1 Fluorosis: "Sporadic pain; stiffness of joints..."

Clinical Phase 2 Fluorosis: "Chronic joint pain; arthritic symptoms; slight calcification of ligaments..."

Source: Department of Health and Human Services. (1991). Review of fluoride: benefits and risks. Report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Fluoride. Washington, DC.

US EPA 2003 Annual Report: "increasing numbers of people with carpal-tunnel syndrome, arthritic-like pains, osteoporosis may be due to the mass fluoridation of drinking water."