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NUTRITIONIST EMPHASIZES NEED FOR FLUORIDE

Fluorides have come in for attention on more than one occasion recently in the newspaper column "Food for Thought." This column is written by Dr. Jean Mayer and distributed to about 100 newspapers by the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate. Dr. Mayer has an extensive background in physiological chemistry and is a Professor of Nutrition at Harvard University. In 1969, he served as Chairman of the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health, and in 1971 as Chairman, Nutrition Division, White House Conference on Aging.

The following statements appeared in his August 1972 column:

Dental caries -- or cavities -- is our most common disease. It is the result of the interaction of many causes: inherited susceptibility, inadequate fluoride in the water, excessive sugar in the diet, poor nutrition, and poor dental hygiene.

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Since there isn't anything you can do about your heredity, let's see what you can do. For one thing, you can pressure your local government to fluoridate your water supply (if it isn't naturally fluoridated). If your water has at least one part per million of fluoride, and if your children drink it, their teeth will be partly protected. Studies show that they will have only half as many cavities as children who don't get fluoridated water.

Excerpts from his October 1972 column on the need for trace minerals -- including fluoride -- are attached.

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Enclosure

Excerpts from column, "Food for Thought," by Dr. Jean Mayer,
October 1972.

These days most of us are aware that even the slightest interference with nature's processes can cause havoc far out of proportion to its apparent importance. Kill off one species of insect and entire crops can be devastated, for instance.

We're beginning to appreciate the same thing when it comes to the human diet. We know that we must have the "large" minerals such as calcium in order to be healthy. But we are also discovering that the tiniest traces of the minor minerals are also vital to life.

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When I sat down to compile a list of the foods containing all the necessary microscopic amounts of these so-called trace minerals, the result was quite familiar: Liver, meat, fish and other sea foods, egg yolk, whole grains, green leafy vegetables, peas and beans, milk, fruits, iodized salt (if you don't eat seafood), tea, coffee, and fluoridated water. In other words, our old familiar balanced diet.

Let's see what the various vital trace elements are and why you need them. In some cases scientists haven't yet determined the precise amounts you need daily. We only know that they are involved in every single bodily process, from birth to reproduction to maintenance of good health in old age.

IRON is . . . one of the trace elements for which we have a definite daily recommended level: 10 milligrams a day for men and 18 for women . . .

There's even less ZINC than iron in our bodies but what there is, is needed . . .

COPPER, like iron, is needed to make red blood cells, but it's needed in much smaller amounts . . .

There's only the smallest amount of IODINE in our bodies, and it does only one thing -- but without it we couldn't live . . .

There's about as much MANGANESE in our bodies as a tiny chip off the end of a grain of rice. But we need manganese for the good health of the liver, kidneys, eyes, bones, and salivary glands . . .

COBALT is part of vitamin B12 . . .

The few milligrams of FLUORINE in our bodies is needed not only for solid tooth formation in children, but also to help retain calcium in our bones when we grow older. It is necessary for growth of animals. And if it isn't in your water supply it should come from supplements.

CHROMIUM, in amounts so tiny they can hardly be measured, is the most recently recognized required mineral . . .

. . . we have to stick with what we are sure about: That a balanced daily diet not only gives you the well-known nutrients you need, but also those mysterious -- and vital -- trace minerals.