

Dietary Factors Affecting the Fluoride Toxicity in the Fluoridated Area of Rural Punjab

J.K. Sangha and S.K. Bal

*Department of Foods and Nutrition, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana 141 004,
Punjab, India*

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ABSTRACT In India, millions of people are crippled by fluorosis. Though water with a high content of fluoride is the main cause of fluorosis, it is not the only source for the malady which afflicts the teeth, organs and systems. Food and cosmetic also contribute to fluorosis, besides ofcourse drugs. The study was conducted on 200 subjects in the rural Southwestern area of Punjab. Information was drawn with regard to the demographic profile, dietary pattern, and incidence of dental and skeletal fluorosis. The results showed that majority of the respondents were illiterate, involved in manual labour and agricultural and belonged to a very low socio-economic group. The prevalence of dental as well as skeletal fluorosis was higher in men as compared to women. Significant differences were found in the average daily food intake (except roots and tubers) between subjects free from fluorosis and suffering from severe fluorosis (Grade III) ($P<0.001$). The diets of the people suffering from fluorosis were found grossly deficient in energy, protein, calcium and ascorbic acid and varied significantly from the persons free from fluorosis ($P<0.001$).