

Dear Dr. Meinig: You have written against the use of tea, but I understand it has flourine in it. Wouldn't this help prevent our teeth from decaying? C. D.

Dear C. D.: Yes, I advised against the using of tea because of its caffeine which is detrimental to calcium and phosphorus body levels and because of the tannic acid it contains. Although I am also against the use of flourides that are added to water I do not think I mentioned its presence in tea.

A study about the flouride content in tea was reported in the British Dental Journal in 1978. It showed flouride concentration ranged from 0.4 parts per million to 2.78 parts per million depending on the one to three cup consumption of those tested. The amount advocated as ideal is one part per million. In view of the extreme amount of dental decay in English people and their high use of tea, I can't say the flouride has done much good for them.

In my opinion the detrimental effects of the caffeine and the tannic acid far outweighs any slight advantage the flouride might have as a tooth decay preventive.

Everyone has a question about nutrition. Send yours to: Dr. George E. Meinig, c/o OVN, Box 277, Ojai, CA 93023.