

## **Dental caries in children residing in communities in Saudi Arabia with differing levels of natural fluoride in the drinking water**

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Children aged 6, 12 and 15 years were examined for dental caries in three cities in Saudi Arabia, with varying levels of naturally occurring fluoride in the drinking water; Jeddah (less than 0.3 ppm), Rabagh (0.8 ppm) and Mecca (2.5 ppm). For each age group, caries levels were considerably higher in Jeddah than in Rabagh or Mecca. Occlusal surfaces were most frequently affected. Children attending public schools experienced a considerably higher caries prevalence than those attending private schools. All age groups had high levels of untreated dental decay. Preliminary results indicate that residents of Mecca exercise unacceptable levels of dental fluorosis.