

Smiling Brazil to Bring Fluoridated Water to Half a Million People

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Around half a million Brazilians are about to receive the benefits of water fluoridation systems that will be ready by July 1st in the states of Paraná, Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and Pernambuco.

121 systems are being installed in the five states as part of the Ministry of Health's Smiling Brazil program.

According to the president of the National Health Foundation (Funasa), Valdi Camácio Bezerra, drinking fluoridated water is important in the fight against tooth decay. He said that this measure can prevent 70-85% of dental cavities.

"The chief advantage of fluoridation is to prevent caries, but, as we monitor the water, we will also reduce other diseases transmitted by the consumption of water of poor quality," he explained.

According to Bezerra, the Funasa will train technicians to monitor and operate the systems. "The idea is to control and accompany the quality and quantity of fluor used in the water," he stated.

US\$ 6.3 million (15 million reais) will be spent on water fluoridation activities in 2005. The money will be used to purchase and install water fluoridation equipment in systems operated by companies responsible for municipal and state sanitation services.

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