The International Scientific Assembly on the comparative Anticaries Efficacy of Sodium Fluoride and Sodium Monofluorophosphosphate Dentifrices.

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Throughout the past 30 years, there has been a decline in dental caries much of which can be attributed to the development, increasing availability and use of effective fluoride dentifrices. In most industrialized countries, the reduction in dental caries has been in the order of 50%.

It is important to note that the development costs and the clinical evaluation of fluoride dentifrices has been primarily absorbed by the major manufacturers. Little expenditure has been incurred by governmental or health service agencies. Indeed, it could be argued that the improvement in dental health has been manufacturer led.

Manufacturers have continued to invest considerable resources in order to improve the efficacy of fluoride dentifrices available for the benefit of the consumer.

It is relevant to briefly review the "milestones" in the development of fluoride dentifrices, as so much has been achieved in such a relatively short time.

These milestones may be highlighted by considering them in terms of the progress made in the last three decades.

The scientific community, including many of the dental associations of the world, have widely accepted that dentifrices containing either sodium fluoride or sodium monofluorophosphosphate possess comparable anticaries efficacy.

Recently, however, a symposium held in Toronto and published in a special issue of Caries Research has called this into question.

This paper reconsiders these data so that the dental profession, the scientific community and the general public can make informed decisions as to the relative merits of fluoride dentifrices currently available in world markets.

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