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Medical Tribune

Volume 30, Number 11

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL NEWS WEEKLY

Thursday, April 20, 1989

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MEDICAL TRIBUNE

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'83 Transcripts Show Fluoride Disagreements

BY JOEL GRIFFITHS

• "I realize that we have few facts and many unknowns . . ."—Stanley Wallach, M.D., Veterans Administration Medical Center, Albany, N.Y.

• "We could cut it that close. I just don't know where the truth is. That is what I don't know."—Jay R. Shapiro, M.D., Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health.

• "If you are talking about potential toxicity, we have no idea whether it is 18 or puberty. We have no idea"—Michael Kleerekoper, M.D., Henry Ford Hospital,

Detroit.

The question these scientists are struggling to resolve in the face of such dizzying uncertainties is, of all things: What constitutes a safe level of fluoride in U.S. drinking water? Moreover, they are world-class experts working with the best data available. They are members of an ad-hoc committee convened by U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, M.D., at the request of the Environmental Protection Agency to review the literature on the health effects of fluoride in drinking water

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Moderate fluorosis like this has been observed at 2-3 ppm, less than the law allows.

