

## TOOTH FAIRY PROJECT

From 1998-2006, the Radiation and Public Health Project successfully completed a study measuring levels of Strontium-90 in nearly 5,000 baby teeth of children near to and far from U.S. nuclear reactors. It is the only study of in-body radiation levels near U.S. reactors.

The study was inspired by a 1958-1970 study by Washington University in St. Louis, that measured Strontium-90 in baby teeth from above-ground atomic bomb test fallout. Strontium-90 is one of over 100 radioactive chemicals not found in nature, but only produced when an atom bomb explodes or when a nuclear reactor operates.

RPHP enlisted citizen groups, mostly near six nuclear plants, to help educate the public in order to collect baby teeth, which were then tested in a radiochemistry laboratory.

Results were published in five medical journal articles, and found:

1. Sr-90 levels were 30-50% greater in counties closest to nuclear reactors
2. Sr-90 levels increased 50% from persons born 1986-1989 to 1994-1997
3. Sr-90 trends were similar to local child cancer trends in New York and New Jersey

The Tooth Fairy Project received considerable media attention, including the New York Times and USA Today.