

Magnificent Magnesium

Seems most everyone has been hearing or reading about the necessity for more magnesium lately. Apparently, the Western World is suffering a deficiency in magnesium.

But, WHY?

Commercial agriculture depends heavily on inorganic fertilizers which creates nutrient-deficient soil. Food processing decreases magnesium as well as current poor dietary habits. Not everyone can absorb magnesium orally due to phytic acid, prescription medication/pharmaceuticals or malabsorption. Chronic stress is associated with magnesium deficiency because the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol release magnesium from the cells. Diuretics for high blood pressure can release too much magnesium through the urine. If you constantly use stomach acid inhibitors like Zantac, have an unhealthy digestive tract or a diet low in necessary probiotics, you might be suffering from a magnesium deficiency.

What does magnesium do for us?

This essential, magical mineral is involved in over 300 enzymatic reactions in the body. It helps stabilize electrical conduction in the cardiac muscle and relaxes the smooth muscle in blood vessels, contributing to maintenance of normal blood pressure and vascular tone. It also helps insulin in transporting glucose into the cells. It can prevent and treat osteoporosis by helping the body properly utilize calcium. Without magnesium, the body can not properly absorb calcium. If you don't have enough magnesium to keep calcium dissolved, you may end up with calcium-excess muscle spasms, fibromyalgia, migraines, hardening of the arteries. It is extremely important to have the correct calcium-magnesium balance.

What are the signs of a possible magnesium deficiency?

Muscle twitches, tremors or cramps, diabetes, fibromyalgia, hardening of the arteries, mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, mental numbness or lack of emotion, headaches and migraines, osteoporosis or reduced bone mass, fatigue and muscle weakness, high blood pressure, asthma and irregular heartbeat to mention a few.

OK...sounds like magnesium is pretty important!

But, how do I get more of it in my diet?

Daily, a man needs 420mg and a woman requires 320 mg of dietary magnesium. Some of the highest sources would be dark (not milk) chocolate (70% or higher), 1 avocado has about 60 mg, an ounce of cashews offers 82 mg and almonds and Brazil nuts are an excellent source, too. Most seeds are jam-packed with pumpkin seeds giving an impressive 150mg for a small ounce. Legumes are good with cooked black beans scoring 120 mg for 1 cup. Dark leafy greens are always favourable with cooked spinach rating 157 mg for 1 cup.

On the other end of the scale, the **worst foods** are table sugar, white rice and flour, hamburgers, chicken breast, bacon and potatoes. If you eat a burger and fries or chicken schnitzel and mash regularly, you might just have a magnesium deficiency.

For those on prescription drugs, poor digestive health, liver problems, nutritional malabsorption or deficient in friendly gut bacteria who want to avoid the digestive process, topically is the way to go. Soak in a tub or have a foot bath with magnesium crystals, spray fast acting magnesium spray on your skin or rub in some magnesium gel or lotion. Make sure you use at least a magnesium chloride and not just a magnesium sulfate like Epsom Salts especially if you want better detoxing, metabolism and kidney functions. There are many different magnesium products on the market like, chloride, threonate, citrate, glycinate and so on so it is best to consult a nutritional therapist who knows which is best for your condition or health.

Happy New Year!

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