

Manganese for your Knees?!

Ouch! Sore knees and joint pain. So annoying.

Or, if you have a low thyroxine level and take medication daily, have PMS, osteoporosis or osteoarthritis, diabetes or pre-diabetes, high cholesterol, fits, dizziness or poor sense of balance, weight gain, inflammation pain or blood sugar dramas...you might have a deficiency in Manganese.

We've all heard of magnesium but what the heck is manganese?!

Manganese is an essential trace mineral that is involved in many chemical processes in our body. It activates more than 20 enzymes to aid in the processing of cholesterol, carbohydrates and protein. Our body can store up to 20 mg of manganese in our kidneys, liver, pancreas and bones.

If you are diabetic or pre-diabetic, you might think about stepping up your manganese foods to help regulate and stabilize your blood sugar and to boost the stores of manganese in our pancreas. It also is important for insulin production.

Manganese promotes healthy DNA, is essential for reproduction and red blood cell synthesis, helps to form healthy bones, cartilage, tissues and nerves and is required for brain function as it supports a healthy nervous system. These are all issues that arise as we age.

If you are planning a family or pregnant, you might want to up your intake of foods with a higher concentration of manganese.

The enzyme SOD (aka superoxide dismutase) is a powerful antioxidant thought to slow the rate of cell destruction by providing defence against free radicals, especially the most prolific free radical, superoxide. Superoxide free radicals are thought to be responsible for the breakdown of synovial fluid that leads to the painful inflammatory response in joints present in conditions like arthritis. SOD is one of the most important antioxidant enzymes in the body and manganese is part of it.

A few other bonuses to getting enough manganese is to aid in weight loss, PMS and anaemia.

Zinc and Vitamins E, B1, C and K help promote better absorption and protection of manganese. However, there are adversaries to absorption of manganese. If you have taken antibiotics over the last few years, drink alcohol, eat refined or processed foods or get too much calcium, you will be substantially reducing your manganese stores leading to a deficiency.

How much manganese do I need a day?

1.8-2.3 mg a day is enough providing you don't indulge in the adversaries mentioned above. If you do, you might want to step up your intake. It is considered safe up to 9-11 mg a day but more than that can cause dizziness and other ill effects. Be careful of taking a multi

vitamin or supplements as some have too much manganese for those eating a diet with plenty of it.

What do I eat to get enough manganese in my diet?

Easy! If you are not gluten intolerant, most grains offer respectable quantities. Try a cup of oats with black berries, raspberries or strawberries and a handful of pecans or almonds or spoonful of chia seeds or ground flax seeds to supply the daily requirements. Chia and Flax seeds also have the super important Omega 3 oil so you can drizzle a bit of flax seed oil on top and Voila! All good for the day.

Whole wheat, not that processed stuff, can be great with some nut butter and dark leafy greens with some pineapple chunks or grapes on the side for a lunch.

Most grains and brown rice, never white, offer heaps of manganese as do seeds.

Beans like Pinto, Lima, and Chickpea are great to add to your meal planning.

In the fruit category, pineapple tops the list with blackberries, raspberries and grapes showing impressive amounts of manganese as well.

So, basically, eat a well-balanced diet with quality seeds, nuts, grains, fruit and dark leafy greens and you should be good to go as long as you don't take antibiotics, drink alcohol and eat refined or processed foods!

To Your Health!

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