



## THE BENEFITS OF MAGNESIUM

### Why Are We So Deficient?

Are we being poisoned by our food? We are increasingly stressed. Our engines are running on high to keep up with life and it is draining us. Stress hormone production requires high levels of magnesium, and stressful experiences lead to depletion of magnesium stores.

We are eating more sugar than ever. For every molecule of sugar we consume, our bodies use 54 molecules of magnesium to process it.

Low levels of magnesium are present in the soil, and modern farming techniques deplete stores of magnesium.

Magnesium is depleted by many pharmaceutical drugs and estrogen compounds such as oral contraceptives, antibiotics, steroids, and blood pressure medications like diuretics. The diuretic effect of coffee and tea (i.e. caffeine) may also raise excretion levels. Fluoride also competes with magnesium for absorption. Recently, heartburn medications including proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), like Nexium®, have been added to the list of causative agents.

Nowadays, nearly everyone is magnesium deficient. Refined or processed foods are stripped of their mineral, vitamin, and fiber content. Even when eating a healthy diet, processed products are not the only foods that are devoid of magnesium. In general, magnesium has been depleted from topsoil, diminishing dietary intake across the board, while our need for magnesium has increased.

**1. Heart arrhythmias.** "People need to know magnesium deficiency predisposes them to serious, even deadly, heart arrhythmias" -- irregular and abnormally fast heartbeats or atrial fibrillation -- says cardiac specialist Michael Brodsky at the College of Medicine of the University of California, Irvine. In a British study, taking magnesium daily for six weeks reduced arrhythmias between 25% and 50%. In new U.S. Department of Agriculture tests, women skimping on magnesium developed irregular heartbeats within three months. Supplements corrected the abnormality.

**2. Blocked arteries.** High blood magnesium reduces your odds of dying from common "ischemic" heart disease (blocked or narrowed arteries) by one-third, say researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In other research, magnesium deficiency lowers good HDL cholesterol and accelerates hardening of the arteries.

**3. Blood pressure.** Cornell's Lawrence Resnick recently documented that the higher the magnesium levels inside your cells, the more apt you are to have lower blood pressure, more elastic blood vessels, and a less enlarged heart. He calls magnesium a natural calcium-channel blocker (blood pressure drug) and says supplements can help normalize blood pressure.

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**4. Diabetes.** "Diabetes is a magnesium deficiency state," says Jerry Nadler, M.D., of the University of Virginia School of Medicine. He finds that 80% of diabetics have low intracellular magnesium. Indeed, research suggests low magnesium boosts your risk of developing type 2 diabetes by one-third. He notes that supplements can improve insulin activity and may decrease the risk of diabetes and its complications.

**5. Strong bones.** Magnesium is as vital as calcium in preventing osteoporosis, says the University of North Carolina's Mildred Seelig: "It's essential for normal bone metabolism". In a Swedish study, magnesium, but not calcium, helped prevent hip fractures in older women.

**6. Migraines.** Fifty percent of migraine sufferers have low magnesium, and increasing magnesium intake has reduced the duration, intensity, and frequency of migraines. Headache frequency dropped 42% in German adults who took 600 mg magnesium daily for a month.

**7. Sound sleep.** Several studies show a lack of magnesium can alter electrical activity in the brain, causing agitated sleep and frequent awakenings. "It looks like magnesium is important for a good night's sleep," says USDA researcher Forrest H. Nielsen.

**8. Safer pregnancy.** Extensive research shows that magnesium lessens pre-eclampsia, in which blood pressure soars in late pregnancy, increasing the risk of spontaneous abortions and premature, low-birth-weight babies. A large new British study of 10,000 women in 33 countries confirms that taking magnesium sulfate supplements reduced the hazard by 50%.

**9. Pain relief.** According to Seelig, if you have leg or other muscle cramps, taking 100 mg to 400 mg magnesium daily may bring relief, and magnesium reduces a pain transmitter in the nervous system called substance P. Extra magnesium also may help prevent or relieve painful myalgias (including the syndrome known as fibromyalgia), chronic lower back pain, restless legs syndrome, and chronic fatigue syndrome.

**10. Extra benefits.** Magnesium may help treat premature ejaculation and relieve certain symptoms of premenstrual syndrome. It also helps reduce constipation, anxiety, and anger. PPIs like Omeprazole® lead to decrease in magnesium absorption and, therefore, low levels of magnesium. Magnesium replacement can reduce complications associated with PPIs. Taking magnesium could counteract some hazards of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) like heart attack and stroke. Seelig says, "I still use HRT, because research shows magnesium counters estrogen's clot-producing abilities."