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## CONSTIPATION

Constipation is a symptom, and the cause is magnesium deficiency. Now you can free yourself from the misery of constipation by correcting this deficiency with an inexpensive magnesium supplement.

Taking this mineral, along with vitamin B6 to ensure absorption, is the answer to constipation.

### Why does this work?

Because magnesium controls bowel function and adequate levels causes water to be drawn into the colon softening the stool making it easier to pass. It also stimulates the bowel muscle causing rhythmic contractions (peristalsis) that bring about normal bowel movements. So by maintaining adequate levels in the body your bowel movements will come with ease which is extremely healthy for the colon.

**Magnesium** is perhaps the most prolific mineral in the body after calcium and although we store less than 30g of this mineral, it is vital to hundreds of metabolic functions, 60% of our body stores are found in the bones and 25% in muscle cells, but only 1% is found in fluids outside cells. It is a major essential nutrient necessary for a wide range of bodily functions. But research studies (extrapolated) have shown that the vast majority of the population is deficient in this vital mineral because they don't get anywhere near the RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance) from their diet. The fact that many people suffer from constipation is really just a symptom that the general population is woefully deficient in this mineral.

### How does the body use it?

Magnesium is a versatile nutrient and plays an important role in a wide variety of functions. It works with calcium in providing the structural 'bone scaffolding' into which calcium and other minerals can slot; it also plays a role in the structural formation of cell membranes and chromosomes. It is recognized as an 'anti stress' mineral', due to its involvement in ion transportation, which affects all **muscle contraction** (remember the bowel is a huge muscle approximately 5ft long) nerve impulse and normal heart rhythm. These functions account for its use in easing menstrual and other cramps and in treating asthma and bronchitis. It also helps the functioning of the adrenal glands and so is involved with adrenaline production, a further link to the factors that dictate how we handle stress.

Other important roles include blood clotting, cell signalling' the synthesis of DNA, the formation of important enzymes involved in carbohydrate and lipid metabolism and the production and use of insulin (many mature onset diabetics have been found to be magnesium deficient). It also has a vital role to play in energy production, where many of the chemical reactions needed to turn a molecule of glucose into APT (which is the usable form of energy created by cells) are dependent on magnesium.

## **What are the signs of getting too little?**

### **Cardio Vascular**

Arrhythmias (irregular heartbeats)

Cardiac arrest, sudden death

Heart palpitations

High blood pressure

Mitral valve prolapsed

Chest pain due to spasms due rather than blockage, of coronary arteries

### **Digestive**

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Difficulty swallowing

### **Genitourinary**

Kidney stones

Urinary spasms

### **Gynaecological/reproductive**

Menstrual cramps

Pregnancy-induced hypertension (pre-eclampsia) progressing to convulsions (eclampsia)

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)

Spontaneous abortion, miscarriage, low birth weight.

### **Metabolic**

Carbohydrate intolerance

Insulin resistance

Low serum calcium that cannot be corrected with calcium supplements

Low serum potassium that cannot be corrected with potassium supplements

Elevated serum phosphorus

Vitamin D resistance

## **Musculoskeletal**

Muscle cramps

Muscle soreness, including back pain, neck pain, tension headache, temporomandibular joint dysfunction.

Muscle tension

Muscle tetany (painful spasms and tremors)

Muscle twitchers

## **Neurological**

Convulsions of severe deficiency

Migraine and other headaches

Hearing loss, ringing in ear

Hyperactivity, restlessness, constant movement

Insomnia

Numbness

Tingling

Tinnitus

## **Mental**

Agoraphobia

Anxiety

Depression

Irritability

Panic attacks

## **Other**

Chest tightness, often expressed as "I can't seem to take a deep breath" or seen as sighing in children.

Chronic fatigue

Cravings for carbohydrates

Cravings for salt

Sensitivity to bright lights in the absence of eye disease

Sensitivity to loud noise

## **Why are so many of us deficient In magnesium?**

Today's foods are not what they used to be, foods are nutritionally weaker and many lack essential vitamins and minerals. This is because modern farming methods have depleted our top soils by planting the same crops year after year, land is no longer left fallow and enriched as in years gone by.

The use of chemicals, pesticides and herbicides means that products grown in these soils are not as rich in nutrients. Food processing by the commercial industry lowers the nutrient content even further, add to the mix our own over cooking of foods in particular vegetables and the levels continue to fall. Many people do not eat a healthy diet. Stress causes the body to burn up nutrients at an accelerated rate, so a stressed out persons requirements is greater than someone who is not stressed and magnesium is rapidly depleted by stress. So in times of stress we need to increase our magnesium intake.

## **Which foods contain magnesium?**

### **High- Magnesium foods include**

Periwinkles, Conch, Shrimp, Whelks, Clams, Cockles, Crab, Dried figs, Dried apricots, Dates, Coconut fresh and dried, Bran ,Raw oats, Whole barley, Brown rice, Cornmeal whole, Whole wheat bread, Rye flour, Cocoa, Bitter chocolate, Cashews, Almonds, Brazil nuts, Peanuts, Pecans, Hazelnuts, Walnuts, Soybeans, Butter beans, Soy flour, Legumes, Beet greens, Dried seaweed, Chard, Spinach, Collards.

### **Medium- magnesium foods include**

Hard cheeses, Lobster, Prawns, Oysters, Sardines canned, Mackerel, Salmon, Herring, Haddock, Flounder, Dried peaches, Dried prunes, Avocados, Bananas, Raisins, Blackberries, Cornmeal degermed, White flour, Pearl barley, White rice, Liver, Beef heart, Bacon, Corned beef, Roast beef, Steak, Veal, Chicken, Turkey, Chestnuts, Parsley, Sweet corn, Okra, Kale, Horseradish, Raw cabbage, Brussels sprouts, Artichokes, Potatoes baked with skin.

### **Low-magnesium foods include**

Eggs, Milk, Butter, Cream, Raspberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Strawberries, Plums, Peaches, Oranges, Pineapple, Grapefruit, Apricots, Apples, Pears, Cranberries, Grapes, Boiled Pasta, Boiled white rice, White flour products, Pastries, Roast pork lean, grilled lamb, Beef tongue, Ham, Roast beef with fat, Beef kidney, Halibut, Cod, Sugar, Boiled potatoes, Boiled peas, Boiled broccoli, Beets, Boiled cauliflower, Carrots, Mushrooms, Onions, Eggplant, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Cucumber, Asparagus.

## **Magnesium supplementation**

Whilst many laxatives contain magnesium they often contain other substances to create a chemical compound to act like a drug and is not something that would normally be ingested, they act as a purgative to move the contents of the bowel. In contrast magnesium occurs naturally in the body, when the levels fall

constipation can occur, correct that with a magnesium supplement, in sufficient quantities for your specific needs and the bowel will start to work properly. In other words you will be increasing that nutrient so that the bowel can perform its function, hence you will be addressing the cause of the problem and eliminating (pardon the pun) the symptom - i.e. **constipation**. Therefore supplementation will need to be ongoing because it isn't getting enough in the food supply and magnesium is used up daily and must be replenished.

### **How much Should I Take?**

Start with 150mgs of Magnesium citrate daily for two days gradually increasing your dose by one 150mg tablet daily every two days until you have a bowel movement at least daily if the stools get too loose or if they are too urgent reduce the dose until the stools are more solid. Work up to 900mgs in divided doses.

Some people do not absorb magnesium well and may need higher doses.