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**MAGNESIUM**



**Should you be taking magnesium?**

Two double-blind studies have shown that magnesium supplementation may reduce the frequency of migraine. In research studies, we have found that

magnesium levels affect serotonin receptors, and also have an effect on nitric oxide synthesis and release, as well as on NMDA receptors—all brain structures and chemicals suspected to be important in migraine. In small studies, both migraine and cluster headache patients have responded acutely to intravenous magnesium. In a larger double-blind controlled study, the treatment group, receiving 600mg of magnesium for a 12 week period, experienced a 41.6% reduction in headaches as compared to only 15.8% reduction in migraine headaches in the placebo group.

**What does magnesium do?**

It is responsible for over 300 essential metabolic reactions in the body. It is required for synthesizing proteins in the mitochondria, and for generating energy in most of the body's basic cellular reactions. It is necessary for several steps in the synthesis of DNA and RNA. Magnesium is also present in a number of other important enzymes. As important as it is intracellularly, 60% of the body's magnesium is present in bone, and 27% in muscle.

**Magnesium supplements**

If you decide to take supplemental magnesium, start at 400-500 mg/day in divided doses. The limiting factor for most people is diarrhea. If you are on a migraine preventative medication that is constipating, like amitriptyline or verapamil, this might be a plus.

**WARNING: If you have heart disease or kidney disease, or are prone to kidney stones, talk to your doctor before starting on calcium and/or magnesium.**

To be metabolized effectively, magnesium must be taken with calcium. The amount of calcium should be no more than double the amount of magnesium— this is the ratio commonly recommended for women. Men may require less calcium, and sometimes take a ratio of calcium-magnesium that is equivalent mg/mg.

Many people take in only 60-70% of the recommended daily allowance in the first place, and then things like stress and caffeine can deplete that further throughout the day. Migraine sufferers have been found to have a relative magnesium deficiency in their bloodstream between migraine attacks, and intracellular magnesium levels drop even further during a migraine attack.

Magnesium oxide, magnesium citrate, and magnesium sulfate are bioavailable—look for mixed salts of these forms, or magnesium gluconate, which is ionized, and is biologically active; if you develop diarrhea from those

**NEW WEBSITE**



**HEADquarters Migraine Management** is proud to announce our new website, [www.migrainesurvival.com](http://www.migrainesurvival.com). Migraine Survival offers information for self-empowerment of the headache sufferer. Visit [www.migrainesurvival.com](http://www.migrainesurvival.com) in order to find answers to your questions, solutions to your problems, and comprehensive headache information.

The informational portion of the site, which contains 36 colorful and attractive content pages, is live now. Please visit the site, and tell us what you think. We think you'll enjoy it. A subscription-based interactive headache diary will be live in a few weeks. Stay tuned for this exciting development!

**National Headache Awareness Week**

The National Headache Foundation has declared June 4-10 to be National Headache Awareness Week, and offers the following Tips for Headache Relief.

**The 12 Tips for a Headache Free Year include:**

**Work**

- Schedule a realistic day. Avoid the tendency to schedule back-to-back appointments for a breathing spell.
- Allow 15 minutes of extra time to get to appointments. This way, unexpected delays won't make you late.
- Make sure your work space is ergonomically designed from your chair to your computer keyboard. Using a non-glare computer screen and proper lighting can also be helpful.
- If an especially unpleasant task faces you, do it early in the day; then the rest of your day will be free of anxiety.

The NHF asked which work situations might cause added stress and 50% replied worrying about deadlines, with 47% noting unpleasant tasks that they face.

**Home**

- Get up fifteen minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
- Prepare for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table, make lunches, put out clothes you plan to wear, etc.
- Don't rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, etc. Crossing tasks off of your list gives a sense of accomplishment.
- Don't put up with something that doesn't work. If your toaster, alarm clock, windshield wipers-or other item-is a source of aggravation, get them fixed or replace them.

When asked which home situations might increase their stress levels, 64% highlighted financial worries, while 55% answered fighting with their spouse and/or children. On a positive note, 43% said that spending time with family and friends helps them cope better.

**Play**

forms of magnesium, look for chelated magnesium. Magnesium carbonate dissolved in CO<sub>2</sub>- rich water is 30% more bioavailable than magnesium found in foods or in pill-format.

#### **Foods rich in magnesium:**

Peanuts\*  
Almonds\*  
Brown rice  
Hazel nuts\*  
Blackstrap molasses  
Bananas\*  
Beans  
Tofu\*  
Soy beans\*  
Avocado\*  
Broccoli  
Spinach  
Swiss chard  
Tomato paste  
Sweet potato  
Pumpkin seeds  
Peanut butter\*  
Chocolate\*  
Cocoa powder\*  
Succotash  
Cooked artichoke  
Black-eyed peas  
Whole-grain cereals  
Cooked okra  
Beet greens  
Acorn squash  
Chickpeas  
Split peas  
Lentils  
Kiwi fruit\*  
Apricots  
Baked potato  
Raisins  
Yogurt\*  
Milk

\*these can be migraine triggers for some people

#### **Magnesium-drug interactions:**

Digoxin - Decreased absorption due to magnesium  
Nitrofurantoin - Decreased absorption due to magnesium  
Anti-malarials - Decreased absorption due to magnesium

May interfere with quinolone or tetracycline antibiotics.

May interfere with anticoagulants.

Diuretics such as furosemide (Lasix) or hydrochlorothiazide can result in magnesium depletion.

Iron supplements may interfere with magnesium supplement absorption.

- Check your breathing throughout the day, and before, during, and after highpressure situations. If you find your stomach muscles are knotted and your breathing is shallow, relax all your muscles and take several deep, slow breaths.
- Try a yoga technique. Inhale deeply through your nose to the count of eight. Then, with lips puckered, exhale very slowly through your mouth for 16 counts, or for as long as you can. Concentrate on the long sighing sound and feel the tension dissolve. Repeat 10 times.
- Use your weekend time for a change of pace. If your work week is slow and patterned, build action and time for spontaneity into your weekends. If your work week is fast-paced and full of deadlines, seek peace and solitude during your days off.
- Allow yourself time – everyday – for privacy, quiet, and introspection.

According to an online survey conducted by the NHF, 59% of respondents indicated that they miss work or other activities because of headaches at least once a month. The NHF survey results reported that 63% of respondents felt that not having personal time was a stressor and 60% fail to schedule time out from their activities.

According to Dr. Seymour Diamond, founder and executive chairman of the National Headache Foundation, "It is important that headache sufferers realize that in addition to proper diagnosis and treatment, there are self- management techniques they can use to help to reduce their headaches." These are common sense tips that can easily be integrated into everyday life.

The goals of National Headache Awareness Week are to gain recognition of headache pain as a real and legitimate neurobiological condition, to let sufferers know that there are new treatments available, and to encourage sufferers to see a healthcare provider for proper diagnosis and treatment.

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