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Orthomolecular Medicine News Service

More Magnesium Means Better Health

(OMNS October 23, 2007) Over two-thirds of all Americans do not consume the recommended daily intake of magnesium. Even more alarming are data from a study showing that 19% of Americans do not consume even one-half of the government's recommended daily intake of magnesium. (1) It is therefore not surprising that disability and death from heart attack and stroke are the nation's leading killers. The National Institutes of Health says, "Magnesium is needed for more than 300 biochemical reactions in the body. It helps maintain normal muscle and nerve function, keeps heart rhythm steady, supports a healthy immune system, and keeps bones strong. Magnesium also helps regulate blood sugar levels, promotes normal blood pressure, and is known to be involved in energy metabolism and protein synthesis. There is an increased interest in the role of magnesium in preventing and managing disorders such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes." (2) Inadequate magnesium intake has also been associated with cancer, asthma, allergies, arthritis, osteoporosis, kidney stones, migraine headaches, menstrual cramps, PMS, tetany and cramps, and other conditions as well. (3) A list this long fully justifies increased concern about population-wide magnesium deficiency.

Foods high in magnesium include nuts, seeds, spinach, yogurt, wheat germ, and whole grains. Few Americans eat enough of these to ensure an adequate magnesium intake of 400 mg/day. Magnesium supplements are commonly available as inexpensive magnesium oxide in 100 or 250 mg tablets. For better absorption, physicians often prefer amino acid chelated magnesium tablets or magnesium citrate. Magnesium is available without prescription at discount and health food stores everywhere. People typically start supplementation with 200mg per day and may slowly increase to 600mg per day, taken in divided doses, some with each meal. (4,5) Persons with kidney failure should not take supplemental magnesium unless directed to by their physician. Otherwise, magnesium toxicity is extremely rare. There have been no deaths from dietary supplementation with magnesium. (6)

References:

- (1) King D, Mainous A 3rd, Geesey M, Woolson R. Dietary magnesium and C-reactive protein levels. *J Am Coll Nutr.* 2005 Jun 24(3):166-71.
- (2) <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/magnesium.asp>
- (3) <http://www.mgwater.com>
- (4) Miller T. The role of magnesium in the prevention of coronary disease and other disorders. <http://www.mgwater.com/tmiller.shtml>
- (5) Dean C. The magnesium miracle. <http://www.carolyndean.com>
- (6) <http://www.aapcc.org/annual.htm>

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