

Everything about Magnesium Deficiency and How to Avoid Chronic Diseases

Deblina Biswas [Diseases](#), [Remedies](#)

We get so hot and bothered about chronic diseases that we seldom give importance to nutritional deficiencies. This deficiency, ironically, in the long run, happens to be the [cause of most chronic diseases](#). Magnesium deficiency is one such problem which we all ignore but it is, as some experts say, the single largest health problem in the world today.



Which got us thinking, what is the [importance of magnesium](#)? Magnesium acts as a catalyst for over 300 biochemical reactions in the body and impacts blood pressure, immune function, metabolism and many other aspects of health.

Why are more and More People Suffering from Magnesium Deficiency

There are several reasons which have made magnesium deficiency so widespread in today's times, but it wasn't so in the past.

The depletion of valuable nutrients from the top layer of the soil means that plants and meat from animals that feed on these nutrient enriched plants are deprived of the essential magnesium. Use of various chemicals like fluoride and chlorine in the water supply strips off the magnesium, since these chemicals can bind to magnesium.



Also, there are certain foods and drinks, like caffeine and sugar which also further deplete the body's already depleted levels of magnesium.

Stress is another important factor; the rising stress levels, thanks to a modern lifestyle, also deplete the already dwindling levels of magnesium.

It's only a lucky percentage of the population that lives near the ocean, which is a good source of magnesium, who eat foods that are grown in magnesium rich soil, drink magnesium rich water, and are able to keep stress at bay, who have optimum levels of magnesium. The rest of us would have to suffer the consequences of depleted levels of magnesium, so one has to think of supplementation.

Is Calcium the Real Cause Behind Depleting Levels of Magnesium?

Most of us are not aware of the importance of adequate levels of magnesium, we are more concerned about our calcium intake, and as a result, many of us get more than the required amount of calcium. Calcium is the one mineral which is used to fortify many processed foods like dairy or dairy alternatives, and also orange juice.

Calcium is one of the most touted essential nutrients, the depletion of which can affect our bones. But when calcium levels in the body become too high, it can result in calcification.

The sodium: potassium pump, in each cell of our body, regulates the balance of minerals both inside and outside the cells.



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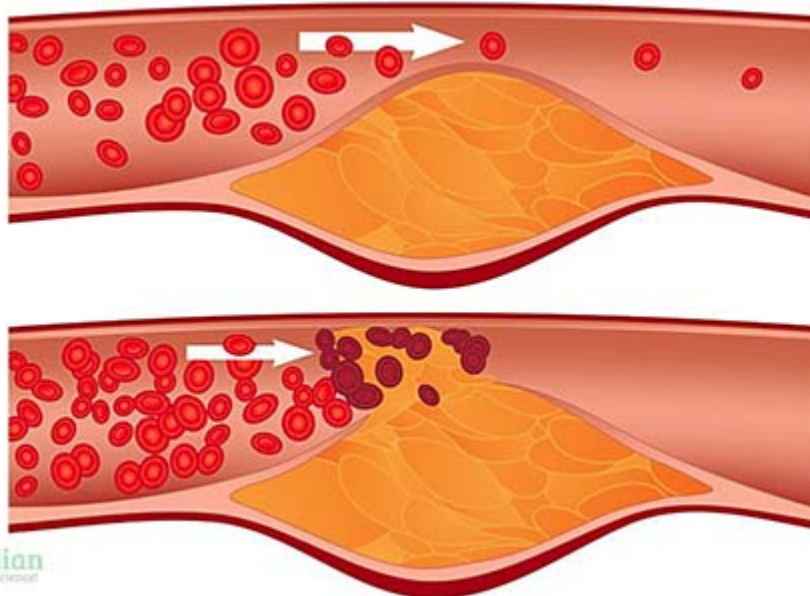
Depleting levels of magnesium deficiency keeps this pump from working optimally. When there is more than the required amount of calcium in the body, the ratio becomes topsy-turvy and the pump lets in too much calcium into the cells.

There are other nutrients which come into the fray in the calcification equation, like Vitamins K and D; but the biggest reason why our cells get over calcified is the magnesium depletion.

Magnesium deficiency has some serious health consequences which we need to be aware of. So, we need to be careful and more mindful of the telltale signs and symptoms which could warn us that we are indeed suffering from magnesium deficiency.

1. Calcification of the Arteries

This is one of the most dangerous impacts of magnesium deficiency. The calcification of arteries, owing to low magnesium levels, can lead to serious coronary heart ailments like heart disease and heart problems.



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In fact, when patients have suffered a heart attack, they are immediately administered injections of magnesium chloride to help stop the blood clotting and the calcification.

2. Suffering from Muscle Spasms

If you are regularly afflicted by muscle spasms and cramps, the underlying cause might be one of the many symptoms of magnesium deficiencies.

If you are into running marathons or an athlete in general who suffers from these sudden bouts of cramps and spasms in your hands and legs, a magnesium supplement might fix the problem sooner than you think.



While most people think that the lack of potassium leads to muscle cramps, we largely ignore magnesium, which more often than not, seems to be the underlying cause.

3. Magnesium aids in optimal mental health

More and more evidence is coming up to prove that magnesium deficiency can lead to depression and mental ailments.

Magnesium is clubbed in the synapse between two neurons along with the other two minerals, calcium, and glutamate. Too much calcium and glutamate is toxic. The large proportions activate the NMDA receptor. Magnesium can act as a guard on the NMDA receptor without activating it.



So when we are lacking in optimal amounts of magnesium, there is no magnesium to protect and manage the amount of calcium and glutamate inside and it hence ends up activating the receptor like there is no tomorrow. If this goes on for a long time, it damages the neurons, eventually leading to cell death. In the brain, this damage can be irreversible.

Also, more magnesium means fewer episodes of stress related problems.

4. High Blood Pressure/Hypertension

There have been innumerable studies to prove that regular and optimal consumption of magnesium can keep hypertension at bay. It has also been seen that people suffering from hypertension have seen a dramatic decrease in blood pressure levels when they are given magnesium supplementation.



Also, with adequate levels of magnesium, the chances of you suffering from hypertension becomes that much lower.

5. Hormone Problems

Low magnesium levels also affect hormone levels. It is said that when there is hormonal imbalance, the abysmally low magnesium levels have been regarded as one of the causes, which means that higher magnesium levels lead to a greater balance in the progesterone and estrogen levels.



This is one of the reasons why pregnant women experience more leg cramps and why women suffer from these muscular type complaints when PMS-ing in the second half of their cycles, when magnesium levels are depleted and when the progesterone/estrogen levels spike up in an inverse proportion.

It is also said that too much chocolate cravings can signify magnesium deficiency. So, beware of all those late-night cravings for that brown bar, it might have other sinister reasons.

6. May affect pregnant ladies

Magnesium can help pregnant ladies who suffer from hypertension or muscle cramps to help with muscle cramps and reduce chances of preterm labor and migraines.



Consider using a supplement which has zero side-effects like digestive issues during pregnancy.

7. Loss of appetite

Low magnesium in the body can also cause loss of appetite. Magnesium helps the body digest and also absorb the essential nutrients like proteins, fats, and carbohydrates.

Your internal system fails to function properly when you are not able to absorb the right nutrients, this invariably leads to loss of appetite, nausea, and vomiting.

8. Impacts sleep

Some people suffer from sleep disorders but cannot put their finger on exactly what causes their sleep problems. They can sense the difference as soon as they start taking a magnesium supplement. Magnesium is said to relax the body and mind and can induce restful sleep.



Magnesium is also needed for optimal function of the GABA receptors in the brain; GABA is that neurotransmitter which allows the brain to be coerced into a restful state.

9. Low Energy

Magnesium is particularly essential in the reactions that create ATP energy in the cells.

ATP or adenosine triphosphate is the main source of energy in the cells and must be bound to a magnesium ion in order to stay active.

In all actuality, you won't have any energy at the cellular level. So if you are fatigued, experiencing low energy and lack of drive lately, you know what to blame.

10. Bone Health

Whenever we think of our bone health, the first thing we think of is whether our calcium intake is enough. We seldom think about magnesium which is just as important, or even more so. When you suffer from **magnesium deficiency symptoms**, you do not ingest enough vitamin D, which in turn helps absorb calcium. So, when it comes to your bone health, one is dependent on other and you cannot ignore any one of the important nutrients for the upkeep of your bones.



Magnesium is also required to activate the hormone calcitonin, which takes calcium out of the muscles and soft tissues and coerces it into the bones. This is one way to explain why optimal levels of magnesium help lower the risk of diseases like heart attack, osteoporosis, kidney stones and arthritis.

11. For proper assimilation of important minerals

Many important vitamins and minerals work together as a team and magnesium is a powerhouse in this respect.

Magnesium is required for proper utilization of calcium, Vitamin K, potassium, Vitamin D and many other nutrients.

Load up on these Foods to get your Dose of Magnesium

Supplementation is a tricky word. We might go ahead and buy any supplement we see on the pharmacy shelf and we think that as long as we are ingesting magnesium, any amount will do. But the truth of the matter is you need to consult your doctor before you load up on any kinds of supplement, as too much of a good thing may not be good after all, and it might even prove to be toxic. So the safest way to load on magnesium or any other mineral is through foods.

- **Eat magnesium-rich foods-** The foods which you must include in your daily diet to get enough of magnesium are kelp, almond, dark chocolate, cashews, buckwheat, Brazil nuts, molasses, dulse, millet, filberts, and pecans.



It's important to soak the nuts for twelve hours to reap their benefits as they release enzyme inhibitors known as phytic acid. Otherwise, you might end up depleting zinc levels, and load on magnesium levels.

- **Do not hinder the absorption of magnesium-** You might be doing something which stops the absorption of important nutrients like magnesium, here are the things which stop you from ingesting adequate amounts of magnesium.
- **Gluten-** Gluten is a mixture of two proteins present in cereal grains, especially wheat, which is responsible for the elastic texture of the dough. Often, too much of gluten consumption can inhibit the absorption of magnesium.
- **Cooking foods-** Cooking foods can actually strip off important minerals from the body. Instead, include more raw foods in each of your meals. The raw foods to include nuts, seeds, vegetables.
- **Alcohol-** Non-organic foods are planted in soils that use plenty of herbicides and pesticides which strip off magnesium.



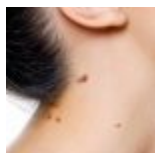
- **Sugar overdose-** Overstuffing yourself with refined sugar, corn syrup, and other artificial sweeteners can stop you from absorbing essential nutrients, including magnesium.
- **Prolonged stress-** If you are too stressed about something, nutrients like magnesium is periodically leeched from the bones. You must seek out yoga and breathing exercises to combat stress.
- **Too much of refined salt-** Cheap common salt strips off important nutrients from the body. Switch to Himalayan pink salt or Celtic sea salt to get the [benefits of these salts](#).



- **Packaged foods-** Packaged foods are bereft of most nutrients. These kinds of foods are laden with artificial ingredients which cause more harm to the body than good and also leech away important nutrients.
- **Tap water that is loaded with poisonous sodium fluoride-** A good water filter can filter most poisonous stuff like sodium fluoride, which strips away minerals like magnesium.
- **Indulging too much of coffee-** One or two cups of your cup of Joe shouldn't harm you too much, but if you are addicted to caffeine, you need to cut that out immediately, as it is notorious in inhibiting magnesium absorption.

Now that you have realized the importance of adding magnesium in your diet, start loading on the right foods. In fact, this is one reason you could indulge in your piece of dark chocolate completely guilt-free! So be more aware of the **low magnesium symptoms** your body exhibit and act on them as soon as you can. This is the best way to stop a minor deficiency from getting worse!

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