



Magnesium in Your Diet

This handout explains why your body needs magnesium. Since you take medicine that may cause your body to lose magnesium, you might need to take magnesium supplements.

You can also boost your magnesium intake by eating certain foods. The tables in this handout list foods and drinks that are good sources of magnesium.

These are guidelines only. It is best to talk about your specific dietary needs with a dietitian or diet technician.

What is magnesium?

We need magnesium for more than 300 biochemical functions in our bodies. It helps maintain normal muscles and nerves, 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 involved in energy metabolism and protein synthesis. Magnesium may also help prevent and manage disorders such as *hypertension* (high blood pressure), *cardiovascular* (heart) disease, and diabetes.

Effect of Some Medicines on Magnesium Levels

The drugs cyclosporin and tacrolimus may make the body lose magnesium. Transplant patients may take magnesium supplements to make sure they get enough of it. Some foods and beverages are also good sources of magnesium.

What foods provide magnesium?

Eating a wide variety of nuts, whole grains, beans and vegetables will help you meet your daily dietary need for magnesium. Good sources of magnesium are green vegetables such as spinach, some legumes (beans and peas), nuts and seeds, and whole unrefined grains. Refined grains are usually low in magnesium, so choose whole-grain products instead.

The tables on the next pages list the foods and drinks that are high in magnesium. Include these in your diet when possible to help keep your blood levels normalized. Food sources will not eliminate the need for magnesium supplements, but you will need less supplementation.

Magnesium Content of Common Foods

Food or Drink	Amount	Milligrams (mg)
Vegetables		
Artichoke, cooked	1 medium	50
Avocado	½	56
Baked potato, with skin	7 oz.	57
Beet greens, cooked	1 cup	98
Beets, cooked	1 cup	40
Collard greens, cooked	1 cup	40
Corn, canned or frozen	1 cup	48
Hash brown potatoes	1 cup	55
Marinara sauce	1 cup	53
Mashed potatoes made with whole milk and butter	1 cup	40
Mixed vegetables, frozen	1 cup	40
Pumpkin, cooked	½ cup	56
Scalloped or au gratin potatoes	1 cup	40
Spinach, cooked	1 cup	155
Split pea soup	1 cup	40
Sweet potato, baked, medium	3½ oz.	39
Turnip greens, cooked	1 cup	43
Yellow squash, summer, cooked	1 cup	43
Fruits		
Banana, raw	8 oz.	64
Pineapple, juice packed	1 cup	35
Raisins	½ cup	23
Grains		
Bulgur, cooked	1 cup	58
Millet, cooked	1 cup	77
Rice, brown, long grain, cooked	1 cup	80
Rice, white, long grain, cooked	1 cup	44
Rice, white, parboiled	1 cup	50
Quinoa, cooked	1 cup	118
Wild rice, cooked	1 cup	52

Food or Drink	Amount	Milligrams (mg)
Cereals		
Bran flakes	½ cup	40
General Mills Total Raisin Bran	1 cup	32
Kellogg's All-Bran Original Cereal	1 cup	224
Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats Cereal	1 cup	65
Kellogg's Raisin Bran Cereal	1 cup	77
Oat bran cereal, cooked	1 cup	88
Oatmeal, instant, cooked with water	1 packet	40
Oatmeal, old fashioned, cooked	1 cup	64
Quaker 100% Natural Cereal with Oats, Honey and Raisins	1 cup	104
Quaker 100% Natural Granola with Raisins	1 cup	86
Wheatena, cooked	1 cup	49
Proteins		
Baked beans, canned	1 cup	69
Black beans, cooked	1 cup	120
Black eyed peas, cooked	1 cup	91
Chili con carne with beans	1 cup	64
Cod, cooked	6 oz.	50
Crab, cooked	3 oz.	54
Garbanzo beans, cooked	1 cup	79
Great Northern beans	1 cup	89
Halibut, cooked	5 oz.	50
Kidney beans, cooked	1 cup	75
Lentils, cooked	1 cup	71
Lima beans, cooked	1 cup	81
Navy beans, cooked	1 cup	96
Pinto beans, cooked	1 cup	86
Pinto beans, refried, canned	1 cup	96
Salmon, cooked	5 oz.	56
Soybeans, boiled	½ cup	75
Tuna fish, white	3 oz.	28

Food or Drink	Amount	Milligrams (mg)
Nuts		
Almonds, dry roasted	1 oz.	80
Brazil nuts	6 to 8 nuts	107
Cashews, dry roasted	½ cup	89
Hazelnuts	1 oz.	46
Mixed nuts, dry roasted	1 oz.	64
Peanut butter	2 tablespoons	50
Peanuts, dry and oil roasted	1 oz.	50
Pumpkin seeds	1 oz.	156
Sunflower seeds	¼ cup	41
Walnuts	1 oz.	45
Dairy		
Yogurt, plain, nonfat	8 oz.	43
Snacks		
Oat bran muffin	1	89
Pecan pie	1 slice	32
Pumpkin pie	1 slice	30
Snickers bar	1 bar (2 oz.)	41
Tortilla chips, white corn	1 oz.	41
Trail mix, with chocolate chips, salted nuts, seeds	1 cup	234
Tropical trail mix with fruit, nuts	1 cup	135
Drinks		
Chocolate milkshake	16 oz.	57
Coffee, espresso	¼ cup (2 fl. oz.)	48
Eggnog	1 cup	48
Soymilk, original and vanilla	1 cup	61
Vanilla milkshake	16 oz.	43

