

Magnesium

Magnesium is a mineral that helps maintain normal muscle and nerve function. It also helps keep your heartbeat steady, your blood pressure normal, and your bones strong.

Cancer treatments may cause your magnesium levels to become low. Your doctor may prescribe magnesium as an antacid or laxative; suggest that you take a magnesium supplement; or advise you about eating foods that contain magnesium.

Magnesium can be toxic if you take more than the safe limit. It may also affect how certain medications work. Follow the advice from your health care team about taking magnesium supplements and about eating large amounts of foods high in magnesium.

How Much Magnesium Do I Need?

The amount of magnesium you need to get from food (and possibly supplements) depends on your age and sex. Use the following chart to learn daily magnesium goals for most healthy teens and adults. Your doctor or registered dietitian (RD) will tell you what goal is right for you.

Daily Magnesium Recommendations in Milligrams (mg)

Age	Males	Females
14–18 years	410 mg	360 mg
19–30 years	400 mg	310 mg
31+ years	420 mg	320 mg

Tips for Taking Magnesium Supplements

- If your doctor prescribes magnesium supplements, take them as directed. Typically, they are taken with 8 ounces of water and preferably with a meal.
- Do **not** take more than 350 milligrams (mg) of supplemental magnesium per day unless your doctor recommends a larger dose.
- When you eat foods high in fiber, oxalates, or phytates (such as whole grains, nuts and seeds, spinach, chocolate, and rhubarb), your body may absorb less magnesium. Do not eat these foods at the same meal that you take your magnesium supplement.
- Ask your doctor about how to fit taking magnesium supplements into your medication schedule so they do not interfere with how other medications work.
- If you take fiber, folic acid, or iron supplements, take them at least 2 hours before or after you take magnesium.

Food Choices and Magnesium

The following chart identifies foods that are sources of magnesium. Include them more often if you have been advised to eat more magnesium-rich foods by your health care team.

Magnesium-Rich Foods

Food	Serving Size	Amount of Magnesium
Fruits		
Avocado, California	1/2 medium	35 milligrams (mg)
Avocado, Florida	1/2 medium	103 mg
Banana	1 medium	34 mg
Kiwi	1 medium	23 mg
Raisins, golden	1/2 cup	28 mg
Vegetables		
Broccoli, chopped, cooked	1/2 cup	19 mg
Potato, baked with skin	1 medium	55 mg
Potato, baked without skin	1 medium	40 mg
Spinach, cooked	1/2 cup	65 mg
Spinach, raw	1 cup	24 mg
Nuts and seeds		
Almonds, dry roasted	1 ounce	86 mg
Cashews, dry roasted	1 ounce	73 mg
Nuts, mixed, dry roasted	1 ounce	66 mg
Pumpkin seeds	1/2 ounce	75 mg
Tahini (sesame paste)	2 tablespoons	28 mg

Continues

Magnesium-Rich Foods *(continued)*

Food	Serving Size	Amount of Magnesium
Legumes (beans, peas, and peanuts)		
Hummus (chickpea dip)	2 tablespoons	20 mg
Lentils, cooked	1/2 cup	35 mg
Peanut butter	2 tablespoons	50 mg
Peanuts, dry-roasted	1 ounce	50 mg
Grain foods		
Bran, 100%	2 tablespoons	44 mg
Bran flakes	1/2 cup	60 mg
Bread, whole wheat	1 slice	24 mg
Oatmeal	1 cup	56 mg
Shredded wheat cereal	2 biscuits	80 mg
Wheat germ, toasted	1 ounce	90 mg
Other foods		
Chocolate bar	1.45 ounces	45 mg
Cocoa powder, unsweetened	1 tablespoon	27 mg
Shrimp	3 ounces	29 mg