

# **The Essential Minerals: Tips for Improved Absorption**

Author: Caroline MacDougall

All the good nutritional advice swirling around the media and the natural food world can be distilled into one simple rule; eat a nutrient rich, fibre dense diet. Despite our best efforts, our ability to absorb the nutrients we eat is often compromised by our diet and lifestyle. Optimal health becomes dependant on our capacity to utilize the nutrients in our food in order to get the most value from what we eat.

Of all the essential nutrients our bodies depend on for optimal health, minerals are the most difficult to absorb. Typically only 30% of the calcium we eat is utilized while the rest is excreted. Unwittingly, people drinking a cup of coffee with their meals decrease the absorption of these essential minerals. Caffeine and other constituents in coffee cause the body to excrete minerals in the urine, especially calcium, potassium, magnesium, zinc and iron. Fortunately, every cup of Teecino increases mineral absorption and improves the body's ability to use them. Read on to learn about the role of the essential minerals in creating optimal health and how to optimize your body's ability to absorb and utilize them.

## **Today's Food Provides Fewer Nutrients**

Food provides the fuel that our bodies require to produce the energy we need. Quality fuel produces a much better running engine; not just in your car but also in your body. By looking at the range of chronic diseases and obesity prevalent in America, it is clear that the fuel people consume today, versus what our bodies were designed to consume back in the hunting and gathering days, is sadly lacking in the appropriate balance of nutrients and fibre.

The food available at your local grocery store may have travelled thousands of miles to get to your shopping cart. Most of it was picked unripe to survive the transport, depriving it of developing rich vitamin content. The soil it was grown in was likely depleted of its natural minerals by commercial farming methods. Thus, our food has fewer nutrients than it did a hundred years ago even though our body needs even more antioxidants and essential minerals than ever to combat the environmental stressors that we encounter everyday.

## **The Loss of Essential Minerals**

Calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, zinc and sodium are all essential minerals that our bodies require an adequate amount of every day. It is easy to take in our daily dose of sodium, the body's most abundant mineral; in fact, most people have far too much sodium in their diets from highly salted, processed foods. On the other hand, it is not as easy to ensure an adequate daily intake of the essential dietary minerals when for example, only 30% of dietary calcium is absorbed normally anyway. On top of that, both our lifestyles and our diet may interfere with mineral absorption. Minerals are lost due to too-high sodium intake, excess alcohol consumption, prolonged stress, too much exercise, diuretics, prescription drugs, phosphoric acid in soda, and both caffeine and coffee consumption.

Often, mineral deficiencies can be difficult to detect, as the body tends to rob minerals from the bone, cells, and other storage sites in order to maintain the necessary levels needed in the blood for basic metabolic processes. For example, the body will leach calcium from bone and steal magnesium from cells in order to keep these minerals coursing through the bloodstream. Internal mineral theft and mineral redistribution contributes even more to mineral depletion. An inadequate supply of one mineral can lead to the depletion of another since many minerals aid in the absorption of each other. For example, maintaining adequate potassium, phosphorus and magnesium in the diet helps prevent calcium loss.

## **Mineral Depletion Leads to Chronic Disease and Fatigue**

Mineral depletion can result in classic deficiency diseases like anemia from lack of iron, or osteoporosis from decreased calcification and breakdown of bone. Over time, mineral deficiencies contribute to a number of chronic degenerative diseases. On a daily basis, we experience mineral depletion by feelings of fatigue, problems with memory, feelings of sluggishness and slow metabolism. Some of the signs of mineral deficiency may be so subtle that we don't notice that something is wrong; we may just experience a general feeling of malaise and suffer from a weak immune system.

You can create an optimal condition for increasing mineral absorption by doing the following three simple things:

- Eat mineral rich foods
- Maintain an alkaline metabolic balance in your diet
- Consume plenty of dietary inulin.
- Rebalance Metabolic Acidity With Alkaline Foods

Metabolic acidity is a condition that creates a high demand for minerals to rebalance the body's natural alkalinity. All foods must be buffered so that the body's tissues, blood and other fluids are maintained at the normal slightly alkaline pH of 7.3 to 7.4 – quite a specific and narrow range for optimal health. Alkaline minerals such as calcium, potassium and magnesium are the buffering agents that the body uses to achieve this alkaline balance. If your diet is acidic and doesn't supply adequate minerals, your bones and teeth will become the reservoirs the body uses to get the minerals required to readjust the acidity to alkalinity.

A simple yet accurate definition of "acidic foods" is those foods that don't supply alkaline minerals. Both regular and decaf coffee, tea, meat, sugar and refined carbohydrates are all acidic foods that can cause your body to be robbed of minerals if you don't have an adequate supply in your diet. Although most fruits and vegetables are alkaline because they are high in minerals, lemon juice, for instance, is an acidic food because it doesn't have a high mineral content to balance its low acidity pH of 2.2-2.3. Our good news is that Teeccino is alkaline because its high potassium content helps restore alkalinity with every cup you drink!

As we age, the body becomes more acidic because the digestive tract becomes less efficient at absorbing minerals and its mineral reserves may be depleted. Metabolic acidity can make you susceptible to illness and disease, including fatigue, digestive problems, bladder infections, Candida yeast infections, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, colds, flu, and allergies. Thus if you are eating highly acidic foods, make sure you include foods and beverages high in the alkaline minerals calcium, magnesium and potassium so your body can maintain a healthy alkaline metabolism.

## **Inulin, the Key to Mineral Absorption**

Inulin is a soluble fibre found in high quantities in tubers like chicory root and Jerusalem artichokes and in lesser amounts in garlic, onions, bananas, raisins and wheat. Inulin is found in as many as 35,000 plants and vegetables, making it a very common substance that rarely produces an allergic reaction due to the wide exposure people have to it.

Inulin passes undigested through the intestines to the colon where it is consumed by beneficial microflora called Bifidobacteria and Lactobacillus acidophilus. The byproducts of inulin digestion in the colon create a climate that prevents the growth of pathogens and putrefactive bacteria. Inulin decreases constipation by producing soft stools and it helps lower cholesterol and triglycerides while normalizing blood sugar levels. By supporting a healthy population of beneficial microflora and increasing the absorptive capacity of the epithelium cells of the colon, inulin consumption increases your ability to absorb minerals.

Although in centuries past, Europeans ate as much as 35 grams a day of inulin and South Americans ate around 100 grams daily, the average American eats only 2.5 grams of inulin a day. Eating a diet with increased quantities of inulin creates the optimal climate in the colon to absorb the minerals from the food you eat. Studies show inulin increases calcium absorption by up to 18% over the norm and it positively affects the absorption of both iron and magnesium.

Teeccino contains 365 mgs of inulin in each 240 – 300 ml cup. Only three cups a day will boost your inulin intake by a third! Plus Teeccino's inulin is already released from the chicory into the brewed liquid, optimizing its bioavailability. Since Teeccino doesn't contain any stimulants that make you excrete your minerals, drinking Teeccino daily helps you retain minerals in the colon where they can be absorbed more effectively due to the action of inulin.

People who are addicted to caffeine often ask those of us who have given it up, "What is the point of drinking Teeccino when it doesn't have any caffeine?" The simple answer is that if you are committed to creating optimal health, habitual coffee drinking doesn't support your goals and Teeccino with its numerous health benefits does! Then, with tongue in cheek, we ask them, "How many essential minerals have you lost today?"