

Migraine & Nutritional Supplements

Written by sdg98ijhADF1

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So far this week we've looked at Migraine, what it is, and why people suffer from it and Migraine & Food and the simple dietary tweaks that can make a big difference to sufferers. Today we're looking at the role nutritional supplements can take in the treatment and management of migraine alongside those dietary changes we've already looked at.

Not read the previous migraine articles yet? [Migraine](#) | [Migraine & Food](#)



Ordinarily I'd prefer to avoid nutritional supplements in favour of tackling health issues with food but there are a few instances where they may be a useful addition to dietary changes. In the case of migraine, research suggests that supplementing your diet with certain nutrients may help prevent or reduce the severity of attacks and lessen your dependency on prescription medication. Remember though, that everyone is different and what works for one person may not work for another and that supplements are just that; a supplement to a healthy diet and are no substitute for food.

Magnesium

There is growing evidence to suggest that the brains of people who suffer from migraine are severely deficient in the mineral magnesium, especially those who suffer from migraine with aura (visual disturbances). This can, to some extent, be overcome by taking a magnesium supplement each day. The most suitable dose, as reported by the Migraine Trust, is 600mg daily of magnesium dicitrate. There are various forms of magnesium such as magnesium sulphate, magnesium oxide and magnesium hydroxide, all of which can have laxative effects but magnesium dicitrate and magnesium citrate appear to be better tolerated by most people. If you decide to take a magnesium supplement it may be wise to start with a low dose and gradually increase to 600mg to avoid any unwanted effects. Taking the supplement with food can also help to minimise its laxative effects.

Vitamin B2: Riboflavin

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Research has shown that taking a 400mg supplement of vitamin B2 (also known as riboflavin) daily can help to prevent migraine attacks from occurring in some people. Now a 400mg dose is over 250 times the normal recommended intake of 1.5 to 3mg for an adult but don't panic - whilst riboflavin will colour your urine an impressive fluorescent yellow which is completely normal, it won't cause any serious side effects and is water soluble so any excess in your body will be passed out via your luminous yellow pee.

Coenzyme Q10

Coenzyme Q10, or CoQ10, has something of a halo in the eyes of the media due to its apparent benefits in a number of diverse health conditions such as high blood pressure, Alzheimer's disease and cancer and there is some evidence to suggest it may be beneficial in preventing migraine. In trials, migraine sufferers taking a Coenzyme Q10 supplement reported a reduction in the frequency of their migraine attacks by up to 50% compared to a reduction of just 14.4% in a group who took a placebo. Coenzyme Q10 also has minimal side effects meaning it may be a suitable treatment for children or pregnant women who suffer from migraine. The only problem at present is that more research is needed as clinical trials have only been conducted on very small numbers of people and the best dose needed to prevent migraine still isn't clear. As CoQ10 is well tolerated by most people it's still a supplement you could consider but probably best to seek the advice of a qualified nutritionist first.

It's been suggested that a combination of all three supplements, magnesium, riboflavin and CoQ10, taken together may provide the best preventative treatment for migraine but again, more research is needed to see if this really is the case.

NEXT TIME: Migraine & LifestyleIn our final article we'll be looking at the often unknown changes you can make in your daily life which can help keep migraines at bay.□

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Important: *If your headaches are severe and frequent make sure you check in with your doctor to confirm you are experiencing migraines. If you experience visual disturbances and pain in the eyes see your doctor immediately. If you're pregnant ensure you speak with a doctor before taking any over the counter or prescription medications or nutritional supplements. Headaches and visual disturbances during pregnancy can be a sign of pre-eclampsia, if this happens see a doctor immediately*
