

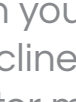
Leg Aches & Magnesium

Just when you think you've got it bad with hot flashes, mood swings, and night sweats, menopause throws another curve ball at you with **intense leg cramps**.

These leg cramps or aches usually come on without warning. Sometimes they can feel like a sharp stabbing or shooting pain or linger as a dull ache. Sometimes these leg cramps pass quickly, but other times they can leave you sore for days.

Leg cramps during menopause contribute to restlessness and sleep deprivation, which can cause even more stress in an already stressful time. This can lead to issues with anxiety and can definitely play a role in the number of mood swings you experience.

As with many of the menopause symptoms you will experience, this is something that can be quite easily treated, but what brings about these leg cramps in the first place?



What Causes Leg Cramps During Menopause

Almost every symptom you experience during menopause, from night sweats to anxiety and vaginal dryness can be linked back to fluctuating hormone levels, especially the levels of estrogen in your body. ⁽¹⁾

When your estrogen levels begin to decline as your body prepares to enter menopause, it can result in some challenging symptoms.

Estrogen plays a large role in how your body experiences pain. Studies show that when estrogen levels rapidly fall, pain symptoms swiftly increase. Perhaps you've experienced leg cramps before, but not to this extent, and now your estrogen levels are diminishing, you are feeling the pain of them more. ⁽²⁾

Beyond this, as your estrogen levels fall causing night sweats, hot flashes and other issues where your body loses fluids, you can become dehydrated much faster. Dehydration causes you to lose out on essential electrolytes like sodium, potassium and magnesium. ⁽³⁾



What Is Magnesium and Why Do You Need It?

Magnesium is a mineral that can be found naturally, and an **essential electrolyte** in your body.

Magnesium can be found in your bones, soft tissues and muscles.

Magnesium is absolutely vital for a surprising number of bodily functions, and it's important to make sure you're getting enough of this mineral in your diet or through supplementation.

Here are a few ways in which magnesium is beneficial:

- Magnesium is **crucial for heart health**. People with higher levels of magnesium in their blood have a lower risk of heart disease. ⁽⁴⁾
- Magnesium helps to keep your bones healthy. It's **essential for the formation of bones** and it helps your body to use calcium and vitamin D properly to help keep your bones strong.
- Magnesium can **lessen the risk of diabetes** by helping your body properly metabolize glucose and carbohydrates.
- Differing levels of magnesium can play a role in **how your body handles stress**. Low levels of magnesium have been linked to anxiety, which is itself another symptom of menopause.



How Much Magnesium Do You Need?

Suggested doses of magnesium vary, and it is advisable to speak with your doctor or pharmacist before beginning any supplements. Magnesium might interact with other medications you are taking, and it may not even be the right option for the symptoms you are experiencing.

That being said, standard recommendations for magnesium supplements are as follows:

Women between 18 and 30 years of age should be getting 310mg per day, and women over 31 should be getting 320mg per day.

Too much magnesium does have serious side effects, though. Be careful or you might experience irregular heartbeat, low blood pressure, slowed breathing, confusion and even death. ⁽⁶⁾

Always talk to your doctor before changing your diet or supplements.



Natural Ways To Get Magnesium

Before beginning supplements for magnesium, you can **change your diet to include more foods rich in magnesium**.

Here are a few ideas for you...

- 1 cup of yogurt (50mg magnesium)
- Medium avocado (58mg magnesium)
- 1 cup of spinach (157mg magnesium)
- Medium banana (32mg magnesium)
- 1 square of dark chocolate (95mg magnesium)
- 1 cup of almonds (80mg magnesium)

There are plenty of delicious sources of magnesium, and it's always better to get your vitamins and minerals from natural food sources rather than from supplements if at all possible. ⁽⁷⁾



Natural Ways To Get Magnesium

There are a few other things you can do to help avoid or alleviate leg cramps brought on by menopause.

Don't let yourself get dehydrated. Making sure you get enough water is important for keeping your electrolytes balanced, which in turn helps keep your magnesium levels where they ought to be.

Include magnesium-dense foods in your diet. There are plenty to choose from, so there's no reason to skip out on them.

Stretch often. It is so easy to just be still while working or watching TV, but you should get up and stretch your muscles from time to time. Move around often to help avoid cramps, or to help ease them once they've started.

For more extensive information please see our interactive education program at www.vergowoman.com

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