

Magnesium

Magnesium is a mineral that is vital for energy production, muscle contraction, nerve function, and maintaining strong bones. It comes into the body through the diet and is absorbed by the small intestine and colon. Magnesium is stored in the bones, cells, and tissues.

How is the test used?

Magnesium measurements are used in the diagnosis and treatment of hypomagnesemia (abnormally low plasma levels of magnesium) and hypermagnesemia (abnormally high plasma levels of magnesium). Abnormal levels of magnesium are most frequently seen in conditions or diseases that cause impaired or excessive excretion of magnesium by the kidneys or that cause impaired absorption in the intestines. Magnesium levels may be checked as part of an evaluation of the severity of kidney problems and/or of uncontrolled diabetes and may help in the diagnosis of gastrointestinal disorders. Magnesium depletion is known to be linked to severe alcohol intake or due to irregular or bad absorption of magnesium in the intestine.

Why should I be tested for abnormal magnesium levels?

A person with abnormal magnesium levels may exhibit one or more of the following symptoms:

- Muscle weakness/twitching
- Irritability
- Cramping
- Cardiac arrhythmia
- Nausea and/or diarrhea
- Confusion

You may also want to be tested if you have abnormal calcium or potassium levels or when magnesium is given for medical treatment.

What should I do if the results are abnormal or out of range?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate course of action.

If your results were low: If your results were abnormally low, it may indicate a person is not consuming or absorbing enough magnesium or is eliminating too much from the body.

If your results were high: High blood levels of magnesium are rarely due to dietary sources but are usually the result of excessive supplementation or a problem with eliminating it from the body.

As with any abnormal results, it's important that you discuss your results with your healthcare provider.

What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- National Kidney Foundation: kidney.org
- Lab Tests Online: labtestsonline.org
- WebMD: webmd.com

DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.

Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.



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