



THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Medications Depleting Key Nutrients?

“We know drugs work but they have serious, and sometimes life threatening, side effects.”

Data indicates that up to 75% of all Americans over the age of 65 take an average of 4 prescription drugs on a daily basis, yet not one study has ever been done to document the safety of any random 4 drug combination cocktail, not one. I have always wondered if many of the deaths from COVID-19 and the elderly were because drug interactions created by their medication caused the perfect storm for a weak immune system.

We know drugs work but they have serious, sometimes life threatening, side effects. One of the reasons they produce long term side effects is because they deplete essential nutrients. If you are on any prescription drug, please understand not only do ALL drugs have side effects, but most major prescription drugs deplete vital nutrients.

A doctor who I respect greatly, Dr. David Brownstein was lecturing and commenting about the rise in use of prescription drugs. Dr. Brownstein knocked me off my seat when I heard him say: “It is ludicrous to think that we



were born and made to have our enzyme systems poisoned and our receptors blocked long term and expect a good result.” Yes, maybe you are taking supplements to support various repair mechanisms. But at the same time, if you are on prescription drugs, you are depleting or hindering the absorption of nutrients.

Can you see the value of asking your wellness clinician to assess your prescription meds? Your clinician can instruct you how to begin supplementing to replenish nutrient deficiencies depending on which meds you take. It's common knowledge that Statin Drugs deplete

CoQ10. But most people are not aware that Statin drugs also directly or indirectly deplete other nutrients like Beta-carotene, B vitamins, Magnesium, Calcium, Folic Acid, Phosphorous, Vitamin A, B12, Vitamin E, Vitamin K, Zinc and Vitamin D.

CoEnzymeQ10 is famous for its role in the mitochondria and energy production. But minerals and vitamins are necessary for energy production as well, especially Magnesium which is deficient in most Americans and is a major influence on heart function.

Think about it... doctors give statins to reduce cholesterol,

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yet statins deplete the nutrients that are needed for healthy muscle function, HMMMM...."heart".... "muscle function"?

Another group of nutrient depletions are caused by diuretics. It makes sense that diuretics as a group will deplete minerals like Magnesium, Potassium, and Calcium as forced increased urination is the goal of the drug. Increase urination and we expect a loss of minerals, probably all minerals.

However, an important nutrient lost with diuretics is B1. B1 is essential for healthy sugar metabolism and to make Hydrochloric acid. Many people are not aware that B1 is a huge deficiency and should be supplemented by anyone who is taking diuretics.

Let's look at another class of drugs, Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDS. NSAIDS used for pain and inflammation can cause stomach bleeding. In fact over 16,000 people die every year from NSAID use. Several gastroenterologists are aware of this phenomenon and routinely use a product by Biotics Research Corporation called Gastrozyme to heal the gut as long as patients are using NSAIDS for pain.

Oral contraceptives are another class of drugs that deplete nutrients. It is very common for families to take oral contraceptives and plan a pregnancy only to find they can't conceive. I often wonder if it is the lack of depleted nutrients that causes the systemic or metabolic inflammatory problems that prevent conception. The deficiencies caused by oral contraceptives are Beta Carotene, B1, B2, B3, B6, B12, Folic Acid, Biotin, B5, Vitamin C, Magnesium, Zinc, Tryptophan and Tyrosine.

Selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors or SSRI's, a type of antidepressant medication deplete B6, B12, and Folic Acid. They also deplete Vitamin D and Sodium. Even if they don't deplete Essential Fatty Acids directly we know that anyone who is depressed can benefit

from Essentials Fatty Acid, which have been shown to reduce inflammation in the brain.

Anti-Diabetic medication will reduce Coenzyme Q10, Folic Acid and B12. Antibiotics obviously create a need for flora replacement, but did you know that "antibiotic use will cause depletions in Biotin, Inositol, B1, B2, B3, B6, B12 and Vitamin K? If you are taking one or more prescription drug, I urge you to seek the advice of your Wellness clinician. Get an evaluation for nutrient deficiencies. If you've made the decision to take pharmaceuticals, especially long term... you should at least compensate by supplementing the nutrients that are depleted by your meds.

As a foundation, everyone needs a daily quality multivitamin mineral, a balanced essential fatty acid and an active probiotic. Next, have your wellness professional determine which supplements and the correct dose you need to replenish the vital nutrients necessary for healthy living. Knowing the truth about your prescription drugs is the first step... the next step is taking that knowledge and doing something about it.

Drug-Induced Nutrient Depletions

Supplementation to consider with long term drug usage

Drug Category	Nutrients Depleted
5-ASA Sulfasalazine, Colaza®1, Mesalamine	Folic Acid
ANEMIA Aranesp®, Epogen®, Procrit®, Neulasta®	None Reported
ANTACIDS (H-2 Blockers, Proton Pump Inhibitors) Nexium®, Prevacid®, Protonix®, Maalox®, Mylanta®, Tagamet®, TUMS®, Pepcid®, Zantac®	Calcium (possible) Vitamin B12 (possible) Phosphorus Vitamin D Folic Acid Iron Zinc Vitamin B1
ANTIBIOTICS Amoxicillin*, Ampicillin, Pennicillin, Tetracycline, Cephalosporin, Ciprofloxacin	Bifidobacteria species Lactobacillus species Biotin Potassium Vitamin B1 Vitamin B2 Vitamin B3 Vitamin B6 Vitamin B12 Vitamin C Vitamin E Vitamin K Inositol Magnesium Zinc
ANTICOAGULANTS Warfarin*	None Reported.
ANTIDEPRESSANTS (SSRI's) Lexapro®, Zoloft®, Prozac®, Zoloft®, Paxil®	Folic Acid Vitamin B6 Vitamin B12 Vitamin D EFAs (increased need) Sodium
ANTI-DIABETICS Actos®, Metformin*, Glucotrol®, Avandia	CoQ10 Folic Acid Vitamin B12
ANTI-HISTAMINES Singulair®, Zyrtec®	EFAs (increased need)

Drug-Induced Nutrient Depletions

Supplementation to consider with long term drug usage

Drug Category	Nutrients Depleted
ANTIRETROVIRALS Epivir®, Ziagen®	Zinc Copper Vitamin B12 Carnitine
ANTIHYPERTENSIVES (ACE Inhibitors, Beta-Blockers) Toprol-XL®, Norvasc®, Lisinopril®, Furosemide*, Chlorthalidone, Digoxin, Clonidine, Propranolol	CoQ10 Phosphorous Potassium Sodium Zinc Calcium Magnesium Vitamin B1
ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES Aspirin, Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Naproxen	Folic Acid Iron Potassium Sodium Vitamin C Glutathione
BRONCHODILATORS Advair Diskus*, Singulair*, Albuterol*	Potassium
CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING (STATINS) Lipitor®, Zocor®, Pravachol®, Cholestyramine, Colesevelam, Fenofibrate	COq10 Beta-Carotene Calcium Folic Acid Iron Magnesium Phosphorus Vitamin A Vitamin B12 Vitamin D Vitamin E Vitamin K
CORTICOSTEROIDS Prednsone, Hydrocortisone, Prednisole, Betamethasone	Calcium Folic Acid Magnesium Potassium Selenium Vitamin A Vitamin B6 Vitamin C Vitamin D Vitamin K Zinc

Drug-Induced Nutrient Depletions

Supplementation to consider with long term drug usage

Drug Category	Nutrients Depleted
DIURETICS Furosemide, Hydrochlorothiazide, Triamterene	Calcium Magnesium Potassium Sodium Vitamin B1 Vitamin B6 Vitamin C Zinc CoQ10 Folic Acid
GOUT Colchicine	Vitamin A Vitamin D Vitamin B12 Folic Acid Iron Potassium
HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY Estrace®, Premarin®, Prempro®, Alora®	Vitamin B6 Magnesium Vitamin B1 Vitamin B2 Biotin Vitamin B12 Pantothenic Acid Vitamin C
LAXATIVES	Vitamin A Vitamin D Vitamin E Calcium Sodium Potassium
ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES Ortho Cyclen®, Ortho Novum®, Ortho TriCyclen®, Triphasil®, Seasonale®, Yasmin®, Ethinyl Estradiol Plus Norgestrel	Beta Carotene Vitamin B1 Vitamin B2 Vitamin B3 Vitamin B6 Vitamin B12 Folic Acid Biotin Pantothenic Acid Vitamin C Magnesium Zinc Tryptophan Tyrosine
PSYCHOTHERAPEUTICS Seroquel®, Risperdal®, Zyprexa®, Haldol, Amitriptyline	Vitamin B2 CoQ10

Drug-Induced Nutrient Depletions

Supplementation to consider with long term drug usage

Drug Category	Nutrients Depleted
RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS Enbrel®*, Remicade®*, Methotrexate	Folic Acid
SLEEP AIDS Ambien®*, Lunesta®, Restoil®, Sonata®	None Reported. F However, since many sleep aids/sedatives act on the GABA-A receptor complex, it may be deduced that they “may” act similar to anticonvulsants which also act on the GABA-A receptor, and whose depletions included: Biotin Calcium Folic Acid Vitamin B12 Vitamin B1 Vitamin D Vitamin K
THYROID Synthroid®*, Levothyroxine Sodium*	Iron

* Indicates a “Top 20” Drug, either by volume of sales or by quantity of prescriptions dispersed. (source: IMS Health© 2006, Pharmacy Times©2007)

This list is meant for informational purposes only. Individuals should not rely solely on this chart for information on drug-nutrient depletions, but rather use it as a starting point or quick reference. Branded drug names are designated as examples for sake of familiarity. The listing of registered or branded products is not to be construed as singling out the actions of that particular drug, but is meant to be a generalized representative of the drugs within the category. Inclusion on the list is not indicative of endorsement, nor should it be viewed as inclusive. Variations in drug-nutrient depletions may exist between drugs within the same category. Additionally, many drug companies do not perform mechanistic studies to determine what effect, if any, their medication have on nutrient status. Therefore, listings should act as a generalized guideline, and should not take the place of appropriate and specific advice from a licensed healthcare provider.

Resources

Pelton, Lavalley, Hawkins, Krinsky. *Drug-Induced Nutrient Depletion Handbook*. Lexi-Comp; 2nd Ed.,2001.

Pelton R. Lavalley. *The Nutritional Cost of Prescription Drugs.*, Morton Publishing Co., 2nd Ed., 2004.

Vaglini F, Fox B, *The Side Effects Bible: The Dietary Solution to Unwanted Side Effects of Common Medications*. Broadway, 2005.