



Chromium

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Chromium, GTF is a trace mineral that plays a role in regulating blood sugar levels. Each "glucose tolerance factor" (GTF) molecule, a hormone-like compound, requires chromium as its central atom. GTF works with insulin to transport glucose from the blood into the cells. When this function is not working properly, the cells resist insulin and do not properly absorb the glucose needed for energy.

The liver also needs chromium to manufacture fatty acids, lecithin, cholesterol and lipoproteins. Without chromium, blood fats tend to rise because the liver cannot filter them out. Processing destroys much of the chromium content in foods.

GTF (glucose tolerance factor) chromium was discovered when yeast extracts mixed with insulin were found to make insulin work better in the lowering of blood sugar levels. GTF Chromium supplements are biologically formed and organically bound (chelated) to live brewers yeast cells during the natural growth process of yeast. The chromium is assimilated by the yeast and thus formed in the same manner as the natural amounts of chromium which have always occurred naturally in brewers yeast.

More than 50 years ago the trace element chromium was identified as an essential nutrient at the National Institutes of Health by Dr. Klaus Schwartz due to its role in blood sugar metabolism. A molecule named Glucose Tolerance Factor (GTF) was found to be primarily composed of chromium. Dr. Walter Mertz, an assistant to Dr. Schwartz at the time, noted in 1959: "Type II diabetes is not a disease. It is the lack of a natural ingredient, known as GTF chromium."



More than 30 years ago, Columbia and Yale graduate and Dartmouth University medical school professor Dr. Henry Alfred Schroeder wrote that "the typical American diet, with about 60 percent of its calories from refined sugar, refined flour and fat . . . was apparently designed not only to provide as little chromium as feasible, but to cause depletion of body stores of chromium."

Chromium works together with insulin in providing sugar to the cells for energy. If chromium levels decrease there is a corresponding decrease in sugar delivery from insulin. Chromium is

an essential mineral found in very low concentrations in the human body. People with diabetes either do not produce enough insulin or cannot properly use the insulin that their bodies produce. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. As a result, glucose or sugar builds up in the bloodstream. Today, scientists believe that chromium helps insulin bring glucose from the blood into the cells for energy.

As many as 90% of American diets are low in chromium, but few people are deficient in this important mineral. The elderly, people who indulge in strenuous exercise, those who consume excessive amounts of sugary foods, and pregnant women are most likely to be deficient in chromium. Low chromium levels can increase blood sugar, triglycerides (a type of fat in the blood) cholesterol levels, and increase the risk for a number of conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease.

People interested in weight loss commonly consume supplements containing chromium. Others have found chromium helpful in 'burning fat', building muscle mass, and/or helping control blood sugar. Chromium has been reported to reduce sugar cravings and is sometimes advised to help with weight loss. Chromium is second only to calcium in mineral sales at this present time. Diabetics represent the group most likely to have a proven chromium deficiency. Stress can induce chromium deficiencies, hence it is possible that some chromium can help deal with certain aspects of stress. Within the body, chromium accumulates in the bones, spleen, kidneys, and liver. Supplemental chromium can help break a sugar craving cycle. The form of chromium that is most natural to the body is Glucose Tolerance Factor chromium, often referred to as chromium GTF.

Chromium is not naturally found in the body in the commonly supplemented forms such as chromium picolinate, chromium chloride, or chromium chelate. Only 1% or less of inorganic chromium is absorbed vs. 10-25% of chromium GTF. Research suggests that there is much less likelihood of toxicity from food chromium GTF than from inorganic chromium. Researchers have several concerns about the picolinate form of chromium. Since it can alter levels of neurotransmitters, some experts think that it might harm individuals with depression, bipolar disease, or schizophrenia. A report of a severe skin reaction caused by chromium picolinate is another concern. It is also possible, but not proven, that chromium picolinate could cause adverse effects on DNA.

On his website Dr. Andrew Weil, MD recommends daily supplements of GTF (glucose tolerance factor) chromium, a form that is well used by the body for people with type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, (marked by insulin resistance), and those who gain abdominal fat easily. Chromium picolinate is widely promoted to help users lose weight, build muscles, control cholesterol, and reduce cravings, "but my bottom line is to skip the picolinate form in favor of GTF chromium or chromium chelate."



Some studies suggest that chromium may improve lean body mass (namely, muscle) and reduce body fat. Pregnancy-induced and steroid-induced diabetes may benefit from chromium as well. Chromium was found to decrease the insulin resistance problems seen in individuals who smoke cigarettes. Chromium is an antioxidant, which helps protect the body against free

antioxidant, which helps protect the body against free radical damage (oxidation).

If you are currently being treated with diabetes medications, you should not use chromium without first talking to your health care provider -- Chromium supplements may actually enhance the effectiveness of certain diabetes medications.



Be sure to try NSP's Chromium GTF (300 mcg) (90 tabs) or Carbo Grabbers with Chromium (60 Capsules).

References

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Yours in Good Health!

Sincerely,

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