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Minerals come from the ground and the body cannot produce them. Fortunately, they are abundant in soil, water and plants, and thus can easily find their way into the body through the many foods that we consume. Six main minerals in the human body are calcium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, chloride and magnesium. Mineral deficiencies, as well as excessive toxicity, are common and can cause many symptoms. Calcium performs several functions in the body, including helping the development of strong bones and teeth. It also supports muscle contraction and proper functioning of blood vessels. Short-term calcium deficiency can cause muscle cramps, stiffness and poor mobility. In the long run, this can lead to reduced bone density and osteoporosis. Many foods are rich in calcium, such as milk, cheese yoghurt, canned salmon and beans. Broccoli, cabbage and Chinese cabbage are also high in minerals. Calcium-rich products supplemented with mineral include orange juice, tofu and some cereals. Phosphorus and calcium work with each other to strengthen strong bones and teeth. Phosphorus deficiencies are rare; in fact, it is more likely to have too much phosphorus in the body than too little. Too much phosphorus in the short term can cause diarrhea or abdominal pain and can reduce the amount of calcium in the bones causing weakness and eventually osteoporosis. Good sources of phosphorus nutrition are red meat, dairy products, fish, poultry, brown rice and oats. Potassium helps regulate the balance of fluids in the body and controls the electrical activity of the heart. It also helps to turn carbohydrates into energy. Symptoms of potassium deficiency include muscle cramps, weakness, constipation, bloating, and abdominal pain. The most common cause is excessive fluid loss from vomiting or excessive use of diuretics. Severe deficiency can cause irregular heartbeat or muscle paralysis. Potassium is found in bananas, tomatoes, potato skin, citrus fruits, yoghurts, fish and legumes such as beans, lentils and peas. The body requires a small amount of sodium chloride or table salt to help balance fluid levels. Chloride is also important for digestion as it is paired with hydrogen in the stomach to make the salt acid, the digestive enzyme needed to break up food. Sodium chloride deficiency is rare as people today are more likely to have excessive salt content. Excessive consumption can cause hypertension and heart disease. Salt occurs naturally at low levels in many foods. In addition, frozen dishes, cheese, processed meats, canned food and some breakfast cereals contain added salt. Magnesium is needed for more than 300 biochemical that control many actions, including muscle contraction, blood glucose levels, blood pressure regulation and a new generation of muscle tissue. It's common for people to magnesium deficiency, and some medical conditions may predispose a person to low levels. Gastrointestinal conditions such as Crohn's and coeliac disease can make absorption difficult as excess alcohol consumption and diabetes can. Symptoms include fatigue, weakness, numbness of the arms and legs, muscle cramps, and abnormal heart rhythms. People get magnesium naturally from spinach, nuts, brown rice, whole grains, fish, meat and dairy products. Since the body cannot make minerals, the main cause of deficiencies is not consuming the right foods or supplements. Mineral deficiencies can affect many different people and diets. For example, a diet that relies on junk food can leave a variety of disadvantages, like a low-calorie diet. Vegans and vegetarians should make sure that they consume minerals that other people naturally produce from animal products. It is always important to have a well rounded diet. For people with absorption and digestion issues, supplements can help avoid a lack of minerals, although it is important to talk to your doctor or nutritionist before starting any supplement regimen. The doctor will confirm mineral deficiency by studying the diet and medical history of the patient and taking blood tests or completing a medical examination. If the doctor confirms the deficiency, he may recommend changes in diet or lifestyle, or refer the patient to a nutritionist or nutritionist. If the underlying disease causes deficiency, treatment of the disease may begin. Vitamins and minerals are trace elements that perform hundreds of functions in the body. Vitamins are organic and can be broken down by heat, air or acid. Minerals are inorganic and hold on to their chemical structure. It can be tricky to transfer vitamins from food to the body because cooking, storage, and simple air exposure can break down some vitamin nutrients before consumption. The strong nature of minerals makes them easier to absorb as long as we eat the right foods. One of the most common drawbacks of minerals is iron deficiency. Iron is an important component of hemoglobin, a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen from the lungs throughout the body. Iron deficiency anemia limits the transport of oxygen in the body. As a result, people experience extreme fatigue, weakness, pale skin, cold hands and feet, and poor appetite. Fortunately, dietary changes or supplements are usually corrected by iron deficiency anemia. Meat and green leafy vegetables are rich sources of iron. Many older people take supplements to avoid a lack of minerals. Vitamin D, calcium and iron supplements are common among this demographic because as we age, calcium tends to leave our bones. Low calcium levels can osteoporosis and osteomalacia. To combat this, the doctor may recommend calcium supplements along with vitamin D supplements as both D helps with calcium absorption. Depending on the person, the doctor may also recommend an iron supplement. Another consequence of aging is poor appetite and reduced calorie needs, meaning that older people usually consume too little iron and other essential minerals through diet. Minerals have a wide range so much that they have their own research discipline called mineralogy. These important elements often have complex processes that lead to their formation. Advertising Advertising Common Minerals that are used in the production of glass include antimony, feldspar, lead, lithium, quartz, silica, sodium carbonate, tantalum, calcite, plaster, Muscovite mica and orthoclase. The main ingredient of glass is sand, which mainly consists of quartz or silica. Glass is an amorphous, fragile substance similar to frozen liquid. It is characterized by the absence of long-range order, a significant number of vacant sites and the absence of nuclear aircraft. Glass is usually made of liquefied sand, which allows you to cool down quickly. Lime and soda are often mixed with sand to change the internal structure of the glass. Other compounds, such as aluminum oxide, magnesium oxide, boron oxide and lead oxide, are also used as additives that directly affect the properties and type of glass formed. Some foods that have minerals in them are red meat, dairy products, leafy green vegetables, nuts, seafood, whole grains and fortified cereals. There are two types of minerals that the body needs, namely macromineral and micronutrients. The body needs macrominerals, such as calcium, in large quantities on a daily basis. Fortunately, calcium can be found in a wide range of foods, especially dairy products. This includes milk, cheese and yogurt, although calcium can also be found in canned salmon and leafy green vegetables like broccoli. There are also many foods that are enriched with calcium, including orange juice, various cereals and even crackers. Other macromineral are magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium and chloride. Magnesium is abundant in bananas, figs, raisins, brown rice, lean meats, bamiya, green leafy vegetables, milk, yogurt and nuts. Products that contain phosphorus dairy products, some meat, peas, eggs, and some types of cereals and bread. Potassium, another important macromineral, can be found in bananas, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, spinach, broccoli, citrus fruits and low-fat milk. Sodium is very important for the balance of liquids and is very rich in products with added salt. There are many other minerals that the body needs for important natural processes such as digestion, neural function and cell health, including chromium, copper, iodine, iron, fluoride, manganese, selenium and In general, it is recommended to eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, as these these contain minerals that keep the body healthy and strong. Carbonate minerals are usually found on or near the surface. They represent the largest carbon warehouse on Earth. All of them are on the soft side, from hardness 3 to 4 on the Mohs hardness scale. Every serious rockhound and geologist takes a little vial of salt acid in the field, just to deal with carbonates. Carbonate minerals show here react differently to acid testing, as follows: Photo (c) 2007 andrew Alden, licensed to About.com calcium carbonate Aragonite (CaCO3), with the same chemical formula as calcite, but its carbonate ions are packaged differently. (more below) Aragonite and calcite are polymorphs of calcium carbonate. It's harder than calcite (3.5 to 4, not 3, on the Mohs scale) and somewhat denser, but like calcite, it reacts to weak acid by vigorous upward. You can pronounce it a-RAG-onite or AR-agonite, although most American geologists use the first pronunciation. It is named after Aragon, in Spain, where notable crystals meet. Aragonite occurs in two different places. It is a crystalline cluster from a pocket in a Moroccan lava bed, where it was formed at high pressure and relatively low temperature. Similarly, aragonite occurs in green stone during the metamorphism of deep-sea basalt rocks. Under surface conditions, aragonite is actually metastable, and heating it to 400 degrees Celsius will make it return to calcite. Another point of interest in these crystals is that they are several twins that make these pseudo-hexagons. Single aragonite crystals are more similar to tablets or prisms. The second major phenomenon of aragonite occurs in the carbonate shells of marine life. Chemical conditions in seawater, in particular the concentration of magnesium, favor aragonite over calcite in shells, but this changes over the course of geological time. If today we have aragonite seas, the Cretaceous period was an extreme calcite sea in which calcite shells of plankton form thick deposits of chalk. This topic is of great interest to many experts. Photo (c) 2009 andrew Alden, licensed at About.com (fair use policy) calcite, calcium carbonate or CaCO3, is so common that it is considered a stone-forming mineral. More carbon is spent in calcite than anywhere else. (more below) Calcite is used to determine the hardness of 3 in the Mohs mineral hardness scale. Your tonacing is about hardness 2 1/2, so you can't scratch calcite. It usually forms a blunt-white, sweet-looking grain, but can take on other pale colors. If its hardness and its appearance is not enough to determine calcite, an acid test in which the cold diluted Acid (or white vinegar) produces carbon dioxide bubbles on the surface of the mineral, is the final test. Calcite is a very common mineral in many different geological conditions; it makes up most of the limestone and marble, and it forms the most cavernous stone stone like stalactites. Often calcite is a gantue mineral, or useless part, of ore rocks. But crisp pieces like this Iceland spar sample are less common. Iceland spar is named after classic cases in Iceland where wonderful calcite samples can be found as big as your head. It's not a real crystal, it's a piece of cleavage. Calcite is said to have diamond cleavage because each of its faces is a diamond or a deformed rectangle in which none of the corners are square. When it forms true crystals, calcite takes platy or prickly shapes that give it the generic name dogtooth spar. If you look through a piece of calcite, the objects behind the sample are compensated and doubled. The offset is associated with the refraction of light traveling through the crystal, just as the sick seems to bend when you hold it halfway into the water. The doubling is due to the fact that light is refracted in different directions in different directions within the crystal. Calcite is a classic example of double refraction, but it is not so rare in other minerals. Very often calcite fluorescent under black light. Photo courtesy of Chris Ralph via Wikimedia Commons Carussite is the leading carbonate. PbCO3. It is formed by weathering the lead mineral galene and can be clear or gray. It also occurs in a massive (non-crystal) form. Photo (c) 2009 Andrew Alden, license to About.com (Fair Use Policy) Dolomites, CaMg (CO3)2, is common enough to be considered rock-forming minerals. It is formed underground as a result of a change in calcite. Many limestone deposits have been modified to some extent in the dolomite rock. Details are still the subject of research. Dolomite is also found in some body of serpentinities, which is rich in magnesium. It is formed on the Earth's surface in several very unusual places, marked by high salinity and extreme alkaline conditions. Dolomite is more complex than calcite (Mohs hardness 4). It often has a light pinkish color, and if it forms crystals they often have a curved shape. It usually has a pearly sheen. The crystalline shape and brilliance can reflect the atomic structure of the mineral, in which two motions of very different sizes stretch emphasize the crystal lattice. However, usually two minerals appear so much similar that an acid test is the only quick way to distinguish them. In the center of this sample you can see the diamond cleavage of dolomite, which is typical for carbonate minerals. Rock, which is primarily dolomite is sometimes called dolostone, but dolomite or dolomite stone are the preferred names. In fact, rock dolomite has been named before the mineral that makes up it. Photo courtesy of Krzysztof Pietras via Wikimedia Commons Magnesite is carbonate MgCO3. This dull white mass is its usual appearance; tongue sticks to it. This rarely occurs in pure crystals like calcite. Photo courtesy Ra'ike via Wikimedia Commons Malachit hydrated copper carbonate, carbonate. (more below) Malachit is formed in the upper, oxidized parts of copper deposits and usually has a botrioid habit. Intense green is typical of copper (although chromium, nickel and iron also make up green mineral colors). It bubbles with cold acid, showing malachi to be carbonate. Usually you will see malachi in rock shops and in decorative objects, where its strong color and concentric striped structure produce a very picturesque effect. This sample shows a more massive habit than the typical botrioid habit that mineral collectors and carvers fancy. Malachit never forms crystals of any size. Blue mineral azurit, Cu3(CO3)2 (OH)2, usually accompanies malachi. Photo (c) 2008 Andrew Alden, licensed at About.com (Fair Use Policy) Rhodochrositis is a cousin of calcite, but where calcium has calcium, rhodochrositis has manganese (MnCO3). Rhodochrosite is also called raspberry spar. The manganese content gives it a pink pink color, even in its rare pure crystals. This sample displays the mineral in its striped habit, but it also adopts the botrioid habit. The crystals of rhodochrosite are mostly microscopic. Rhodochrosit is much more common in mountain and mineral exhibitions than in nature. Photo courtesy of Geology Forum member Fantus1ca, all rights protected Siderite is iron carbonate, FeCO3. It is common in ore veins with its cousins calcium, magnesite and rhodochrositis. This may be clear, but it is usually brown. Photo Courtesy of Jeff Albert flickr.com under Smithsonian's creative Commons license, zinc carbonate or znCO3, is a popular collectible mineral with different colors and shapes. Most often it occurs as earthy white dry bone ore. Photo courtesy dave Dyet via Wikimedia Commons is carbonate barium, BaCO3. The sywel is rare because it is easily altered by mineral barite sulfate. Its high density is different. 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