

Fasting and Electrolytes

The key to feeling well during fasting is to maintain good electrolyte balance – sodium, magnesium, and potassium

Electrolyte levels change during fasting for two main reasons:

1. Your body burns glycogen stores (stored form of glucose) for fuel before body fat. Glycogen holds a lot of water, which is released as it is metabolized. The extra water is also the reason people often note an initial rapid weight loss on starting low carb diets or fasting and also why weight regain is so rapid upon refeeding.
2. Fasting drops blood insulin levels sharply, which signals the kidneys to release excess water.
3. As water is being excreted from the body, other electrolytes may also be carried along.

The possible side effects from this electrolyte shifts/ dehydration include:

- Headaches, dizziness, lethargy
- Muscle cramping
- Increased urination
- Diarrhea

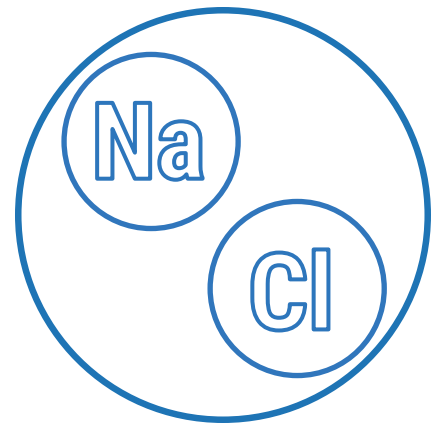
These side effects are usually transient, lasting only for one or two weeks.

SODIUM

Sodium is the most important electrolyte, and also helps maintain proper magnesium, potassium and phosphorus levels. Especially for fasts of 24 hours or longer, it's important to take enough sodium and magnesium to ensure you feel your best!

WAYS TO INCORPORATE SALT INTO YOUR FAST:

- Drink one or two cups of homemade bone broth or a low-carb vegetable broth
- Drink pickle juice (see recipe)
- Put a pinch of salt in a cup of water or directly on your tongue a few times a day



MAGNESIUM

WAYS TO INCORPORATE MAGNESIUM INTO YOUR FAST:

Oral supplements:

- Magnesium citrate is also a laxative, so is good selection if you experience constipation
- Magnesium (bis)glycinate
- Magnesium oxide, the most common and cheapest form of oral supplement is generally poorly absorbed and not recommended

Topical supplements:

- Epsom salts – Add a cup of these magnesium salts to a bath or soak your foot for 30 minutes. The magnesium is absorbed through the skin directly, which does not cause intestinal problems.
- Magnesium oil (see handout)

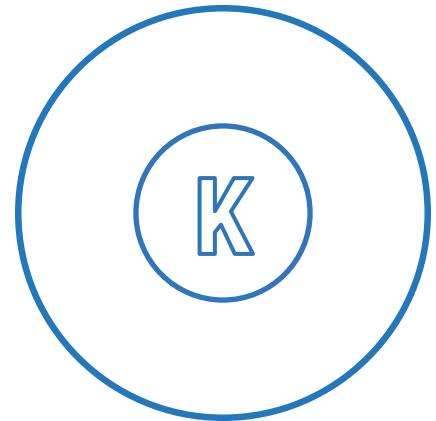


POTASSIUM

Potassium supplements are not generally required during fasting. Speak with your doctor before taking supplements, since taking too much potassium can cause serious adverse medical events particularly if you have other medical conditions such as kidney failure.

MANY FOODS THAT ARE HIGH IN POTASSIUM ARE PART OF LOW-CARB AND KETOGENIC DIETS:

- Avocados
- Spinach and other leafy greens
- Mushrooms
- Salmon
- Many nuts
- Zucchini
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Sweet potato



WARNING: Please speak with your doctor before taking any supplements.