



B6 Deficiency

“The classic symptoms of vitamin B6 deficiencies include seizures, mental retardation, anemia, and a whole host of functional deficiencies.”

Do you know anyone who has a history of taking birth control pills, hormone replacement, or antibiotics? How about diuretics or bronchodilators, or friends or family with a diet high in refined carbohydrates? With one or more of these factors, there is a good chance they have suboptimal levels or what we call a functional deficiency of B6. Let's just review some of the things B6 does and then talk about a simple indicator that you might be deficient.



B6 is an important coenzyme or cofactor needed to make important neurotransmitters like histamine, dopamine, serotonin, adrenalin, and GABA. Let me give you an example of how cofactors work.

Let's say you are making gluten free whole grain pancakes from scratch. You have all the ingredients except baking powder which is needed to make them light and fluffy. Unless you are really hungry you will use those ingredients to make something else that will

satisfy you because you know it won't taste good. The same is true for cofactors. You can have the raw materials needed to make a hormone or neurotransmitter but the body won't make it unless you have the exact ingredients it needs to make it correctly.

This means if you have all the building blocks to make serotonin for example, but you are low in B6, you can't make it. B6 is also a key link in the utilization of essential fatty acids. So without B6, your body won't make the most

effective pain reducing neurochemicals called prostaglandins. Your biochemistry can have all the raw materials but without B6 you won't get the full anti-inflammatory benefits. That's why B6 deficiency could be the underlying factor for many conditions.

The classic symptoms of vitamin B6 deficiencies include seizures, mental retardation, and anemia. However, there is a whole host of functional deficiencies. Functional deficiencies mean that the deficiency is not enough to cause a documented disease

This is a transcript from a “video magazine” we send out each week called the Wellness Minute, if you're not getting our Wellness Minute videos each week, sign up at the front desk

but the lack of it is very restrictive and uncomfortable.

You can start to see why a deficiency in B6 can cause pain and inflammation, numbness, joint stiffness, carpal tunnel syndrome, sensitivity to bright lights, tingling of extremities, sore tongue, depression, hypochlorhydria, fissures/cracks in the tongue, burning sensation in the mouth, history of birth problems like spontaneous abortions or fetal abnormality to name a few.

Vitamin B6 also prevents the formation of homocysteine. Increased homocysteine is a classic risk factor for heart diseases but also acts as a marker for inflammation.

The big three to reduce homocysteine are B6, B12 and Folic Acid. Speaking of inflammation, another popular marker is CRP which stands for C-reactive protein. If we are using an anti-inflammatory diet and supplementation and still see elevation upon retesting, consider a lack of B6 as the cause.

Dr. Carl Pfeiffer in his classic work, "Mental and Elemental Nutrients" suggests one of the biggest indicators of B6 deficiency is an inability to remember dreams. You don't have to remember them for a long time, just when you wake up.

The RDA for B6 is 2.0 mg per day. But stress increases the need for B6. Dr. Pfeiffer personally needed 50 mg in the morning to remember his dreams due to the stress of running the Bio-Brain Institute. However, when he was on vacation, the same 50 mg caused dreams so vivid he had to reduce the dose to 25 mg.

Let's discuss supplementation. What are the best forms and how much can be taken? Most

B6 comes in the form of pyridoxine HCL. However, it must be converted by the liver to pyridoxal-5-phosphate (P-5-P) before it can be used. Fortunately, both forms are available in supplemental form.

Personally, it takes me about 100 mg of B6 in the pyridoxine HCL form before I remember my dreams; however, when I take only 10 mg of B6 in the P-5-P form, I dream vividly.



Because B6 is such a key nutrient; I always ask patients if they remember their dreams. If they don't, I recommend the P-5-P form until they do. I suggest 100 mg of the P-5-P form and then

decrease the dose once they start dreaming.

Biotics Research Corporation makes a product called B6 Phosphate. It contains 20 mg of the P-5-P form per tablet in their unique bio-available vegetable tableting base.

Your wellness clinician knows other ways to assess B6 but this is something you can pay attention to and adjust your levels as needed based on your stress levels.

Paying attention to your body and then making adjustments to your lifestyle to stay in optimal health is far better than waiting until your pain levels are so intense that serious medical intervention is the only option. This is what true wellness medicine is all about. And that's why your wellness clinician sends you these timely videos.

Thanks for taking time to share a few moments with me.

This is a transcript from a "video magazine" we send out each week called the Wellness Minute, if you're not getting our Wellness Minute videos each week, sign up at the front desk