



Phosphorus	
Description	Next to calcium, phosphorus is the most abundant mineral in the body, making up about 1% of total body weight.
Function	In order for calcium, which gives strength to bones and teeth, to be stabilised, it needs to be combined with another mineral, e.g. phosphorus, and then becomes calcium phosphate.
Human Requirements	EU RDA: 800mg
Dietary Intake	Unknown (in the UK)
Food Sources	Red meat and poultry, dried milk and milk products, wheat germ, yeast, grains, hard cheeses, canned fish, nuts, potatoes, eggs and soft drinks
Deficiency Symptoms	Abnormal calcification of soft tissue, tetany (spasm and twitching of the muscles, particularly those of face, hands and feet), lethargy, anorexia. Deficiency is unlikely as it is so widely distributed in food.
Precautions / Contra-Indications	The over-consumption of foods high in phosphorus can drain calcium resources and lead to reduced bone mass. Safe Upper Level: 250mg ¹
Pregnancy & Breastfeeding	Safety of the use of phosphorus during pregnancy and breastfeeding is unknown.
Adverse Effects	Phosphates can be toxic at levels over 1gram per day, leading to diarrhoea, calcification of organs and soft tissue, and preventing the absorption of iron, calcium, magnesium, and zinc.
Interactions²	No clinically significant interactions between phosphorus and conventional medications are known to have been reported in literature to date.
References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals, 2003. 2. Reynolds JEF, ed. <i>Martindale: The Extra Pharmacopoeia</i>. 31st ed. London: Royal Pharmaceutical Society; 1996:1181-1182, 1741.