What Can Epsom Salts Do For you?

Epsom salt is not actually salt; it is a mineral compound, magnesium sulfate. It looks like large salt crystals, dissolves easily in water, and has many uses for health, beauty, and the garden.

There are different grades of Epsom salt, one for agricultural and one for personal use. For personal use, look for USP or the “drug facts” list on the label.

Why Take an Epsom Salt Bath?

Epsom salt baths are relaxing and therapeutic. They are a long known treatment for skin issues like eczema and acne, muscle soreness (well known within the bodybuilding community!), inflammation, bruising, swelling, and strained or torn muscles and ligaments. Epsom salt baths are also a wonderful aid for detoxing and an easy means to up your intake of both magnesium and sulfate.

Why We Need Magnesium

Magnesium is crucial to our health. It is a key mineral for metabolic processes that play a role in more than 300 chemical reactions in the body. It helps the body regulate enzymes and aids in electrical impulses, toxin elimination, muscle control, and more. The University of Maryland Medical Center site states, “Every organ in the body, especially the heart, muscles, and kidneys, needs magnesium. This mineral also contributes to the makeup of teeth and bones. Magnesium activates enzymes, contributes to energy production, and helps regulate levels of calcium, copper, zinc, potassium, vitamin D, and other important nutrients in the body.”

It is believed that most of us do not get as much magnesium as we need from our diet due to depleted soil and municipal water, which is stripped of minerals during the purification process.

How to Properly Take an Epsom Salt Bath or Soak

You will commonly see directions suggesting 2 cups to a normal size bath, more for an oversized bath, with a 12-15 minute soak. David Jockers DC, MS, CSCS, suggests a much more individualized measurement and a much longer soak. He recommends the amount be determined by the individual's weight. The following is for a standard size bathtub:

- Children under 60 lbs: ½ cup
- Individuals between 60-100 lbs: 1 cup
- Individuals between 100-150 lbs: 1½ cups
- Individuals between 150-200 lbs: 2 cups
- For every 50lbs more – add an additional ½ cup of salts.

As for soaking time, he says the first 20 minutes pulls out toxins while the second 20 minutes allows the body to soak up the magnesium and sulfate.

He also cites the following contraindications: pregnancy, open wounds or burns, or cardiovascular disease (without your healthcare practitioners knowledge).

For muscle soreness an Epsom salt bath is one of the best things you can do, but if your goal is detoxification, first do a dry brush rub to remove dead skin and open up your pores. This takes about five minutes. Take your time. When you finish soaking, consider hot and cold hydrotherapy.

Combine Epsom Salt With Other Ingredients

You can add additional ingredients to your Epsom salt bath such as essential oils, baking soda, olive oil, coconut oil, apple cider vinegar, and more.

Essential oils are a natural compliment. The usual suggestion is 3-10 drops. Remember essential oils are medicinal. For recipes google “essential oils plus Epsom salts.” You will generate more than 400,000 hits.

Dr. Jockers suggests adding from 1 teaspoon to ½ cup of ginger or cayenne to “increase heat levels, which help you to sweat out toxins.” These herbs not only enhance the detoxification process, they are full of antioxidants as well.

Use Epsom Salt to Make a Compress or a Foot Bath

You can make a compress to relieve muscle pain. Start by dissolving Epsom salt in cold water with a ratio of 2 tablespoons for each cup of water. Use a cotton washcloth to soak up the solution and apply to affected area.

To create a footbath, use one cup of Epsom salt to a basin of warm water. Soak your feet to alleviate tired aching feet, sprains, and fungal infections of the feet or toenails. Footbaths also allow the body to soak up magnesium and release toxins (though perhaps not as much as a full body soak).

Use Epsom Salt as a Laxative

Epsom salt can be used as a laxative, though care must be taken. It is possible to overdose on magnesium that is ingested and there are several contraindications for this use.

Check out this article on Drugs.com for more information and pertinent warnings.

Use Epsom Salt in the Garden

Epsom salt is used as a fertilizer and an insect deterrent in the garden and for houseplants. Roses, peppers, and tomatoes, in particular, tend to benefit from its use. A trail of Epsom salt sprinkled around an area deters slugs and raccoons.

Additional Uses of Epsom Salt

There are many ways to use Epsom salt. Here are a few:

- Remove a stubborn splinter. (Soak area for a few minutes prior to removal to decrease inflammation and swelling and to soften the splinter.)
- Clean out washing machine. (Pour 1 cup into machine and run through normal cycle.)
- Clean bathroom grout. (Use equal amounts of Epsom salt and dishwashing detergent.)
- Use as an abrasive to clean pots and pans.

But there's nothing better than an Epsom salt soak when your sore. If you experience muscle soreness due to an autoimmune disease, check out *Hypothyroidism – Natural Remedies, Causes, and How To Heal the Thyroid* and *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases.*

Related Products:

- Bath Salts on Green Lifestyle Market
- Omega-D3 – Nordic Naturals
- Fibrenza Systemic Enzyme (500mg) – HCP Formulas
- Boswellia – Pure Encapsulations

Further Reading:

- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*

- *Reduce Muscle Soreness*
- *Homemade Calcium and Magnesium*
- *What Causes Cronic Inflammation and How to Stop it For Good*

Sources:

- *The Health Benefits of Epsom Salt Baths* – OLM
- *What is Epsom Salt?* – Epsom Salt Council
- *Magnesium* – World's Healthiest Foods
- *Magnesium* – The University of Maryland Medical Center
- *Health Benefits of Epsom Salt Baths* – Care 2
- *Fertilize with Epsom Salts* – National Gardening Association