



The “cause” of Annoying Muscle Cramps

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By Dr. Edward M. Burstein

Charlie horse... That tight, aching feeling in the foot or leg we’ve all felt from time to time. Muscle cramps are painful and annoying, especially when they keep us up at night. The good news is that most often, there is a specific cause.

A person who is frequently and consistently bothered by muscle cramps should be evaluated by a doctor for calcium levels. When treating a patient for muscle cramps, a full examination of the physical and biochemical systems should be conducted by a doctor of chiropractic specializing in Applied Kinesiology. After any structural problem is corrected, such as a misalignment of the vertebrae or a problem in the joint, a patient’s diet should be considered. Alkaline-producing foods (fruits and vegetables) are essential!

In addition, the ability to digest and assimilate calcium is critical. To ensure proper digestibility of calcium, sufficient hydrochloric acid (HCl) in the stomach is needed. (Note: Along with muscle cramp, other symptoms like excessive belching, gas and indigestion are good indications of HCl deficiency.) Along with this, is the transportation and mobilization of calcium through the blood. Calcium requires unsaturated fatty acids for transportation from the blood to its binding site -- the muscle in this case.

And finally, thyroid/parathyroid dysfunction should be considered and investigated. These glands help to control the distribution of calcium in the body.

Effective treatment of muscle cramps requires proper diagnosis of the problem. From not enough calcium in the diet to HCl deficiency or a thyroid problem, the causes can be simple or complex and patients should be treated as individuals. Therefore, although calcium supplementation seems like a simple cure, it may not be the answer for everyone.

Editor’s note: Dr. Burstein is founder and Clinical Director of the Berkeley Heights Chiropractic Center, a multi-doctor holistic health care center dedicated to natural healing and optimum health. He has been awarded the status of Teaching Diplomate by the International College of Applied Kinesiology, and shares this distinction with only four other chiropractors in the state and 117 worldwide. Dr. Burstein has lectured at Overlook Hospital and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital on immune, autoimmune and chronic degenerative diseases. For information, call (908) 665-0770.