

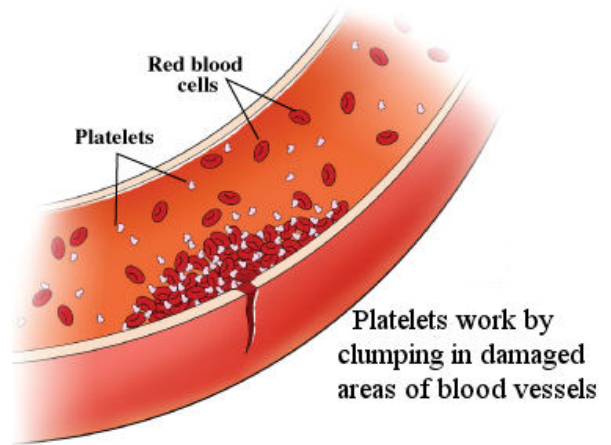
The Low Platelet Diet

Introduction

The Integrative Wellness Center has recently received a lot of questions regarding how to build blood platelet levels. We are writing this blog to help educate you on how to improve this health condition.

The foundational supplements we recommend to increase platelets are:

- Chlorocaps
- Moringa
- Recancostat 400
- Ultra Potent C Powder
- Mixed EFAs
- Min-Rex
- Bone Strength O.P.
- Fola Pro or 5-MTHF Plus Forte



Platelets are very sensitive and can react to many substances, interfering with their ability to clot or triggering their removal from circulation. Several hundred drugs, toxins and herbs have been reported to cause blood abnormalities, and drugs account for 20 - 40% of all instances of cytopenias (reduced blood cell count).

This page contains some of the most well-known causes of substance-induced thrombocytopenia and associated bleeding. It is possible that removing or discontinuing the offending substance can have a positive effect on your platelet count. It is important to communicate with your doctor/healthcare provider as you consider or make changes.

Drug-induced Thrombocytopenia

When drugs are the cause of low platelets, the disease is called drug-induced thrombocytopenia (DITP). In some cases, as in chemotherapy drugs, the drop in platelet count is due to changes in the bone marrow. In other cases antibodies can develop to both the drug and platelets at the same time, causing the platelets to drop. Sometimes drugs cause a combination of both bone marrow and immune problems.

Low platelets can occur almost immediately after taking some drugs that interfere with the production of blood clots. If the drug responsible for low platelets is stopped, platelets may begin to recover in one or two days, but the antibodies to the drug can linger in the blood stream for a very long time and cause future problems. The drug reaction is often specific and a similar compound can be substituted.

Some drugs have been reported to cause more instances of DITP than others.

Sulfa drugs, vancomycin, penicillin, rifampin, ceftriaxone, trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole and linezolid (antibiotics), gold salts, valproate (for epilepsy), amrinone (for heart problems), biophosphates (ex. Fosamax), quinidine (for abnormal heart rhythms), carbamazepine (controls seizures), mirtazapine (anti-depressant), oxaliplatin and suramin (chemotherapies), the glycoprotein IIb/IIIa inhibitors abciximab, tirofiban and eptifibatide, heparin (anti-clotting agents) and quinine (see below) are particular problems.

Tell your doctor if you are taking any herbal remedies or common non-prescription drugs such as acetaminophen (ex. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (ex: Advil, Motrin) as these can also cause DITP. There should be a compelling reason for taking any medication and medical attention is needed for any side effect, including bruising/bleeding.

Quinine: a special case

Quinine is found in some drugs as well as in tonic water, bitter lemon, and bitter melons. In a study of 343 patients, 28 (8%) were found to have drug-induced thrombocytopenia and 13 of these cases were caused by quinine.

Herbs, Food, and Supplements

Some food, herbs, and supplements can reduce the number of platelets for various reasons. This list includes those substances that have been documented in journal or other articles. It is not known whether there are few items in this category or if they are underreported. If your platelets drop after taking something new, please notify your doctor.

- alcohol^{3,44} (also called ethanol-induced thrombocytopenia)
- aspartame (NutraSweet)
- cow's milk
- cranberry Juice
- erucic acid (in Lorenzo's oil, some rapeseed and mustard oil)
- jui [a Chinese medicinal herbal tea]
- L-tryptophan*

- lupinus termis bean (cultivated in Egypt, a food protein supplement that contains quinolizidine alkaloids)
- niacin (liver damage due to long exposure)
- tahini (pulped sesame seeds)

*allergic or cross-reaction to platelets in those with sensitivities to that substance, similar to drug-induced thrombocytopenia

Environmental Hazards

Exposure to toxins and household chemicals can cause a drop in platelets in some people. Below is a list of toxins that have been documented to cause low platelets. You can find more information about environmental medicine and minimizing toxic exposure on Dr. Lisa Nagy's Web site. Check the NIH toxmap for toxic locations near you or local environmental sites such as the Environmental Health Watch.

- Aromatic hydrocarbons
- polyurethane
- toluene methylbenzene (Anisen or Toluol) - (smells like paint thinner, used in the many industrial processes including the production of gasoline and Coca-cola.)
- wood preservatives and solvents
- Insecticides, chlorinated hydrocarbons, and organic phosphorus compounds
- Mycotoxins (toxins that can be produced by molds, yeast, and mushrooms)
- mold (can be in the air, on food, or in cardboard)
- P. sorghina (mold on grains)
- trichothecenes (a family of micotoxins)
- Pesticides
- Various pesticides increase oxidative stress (implicated in ITP) and can promote platelet destruction in the spleen according to experiments in fish.

Food and Supplements that Interfere with Platelet Function

This list contains food and supplements that can change the way platelets work and make it more difficult for your blood to clot. ***They do not reduce the platelet count unless noted. A small quantity of these substances will probably be safe and not cause a problem.***

There are many drugs such as Plavix and Coumadin that are designed to interfere with platelet function as well as other drugs such as aspirin that reduce platelet function as a side effect of their other uses. The food and supplements listed can amplify the effect of these medications.

Many of the listed substances are also antioxidants or have other properties that promote healing. *A balance is important.* We are publishing this list so you are aware that everyday or easily-available substances can have an effect on platelets, although their anti-clotting action is much weaker than pharmaceuticals.

If you have a reasonably high platelet count and few bleeding symptoms, many items on this list will not cause problems unless you ingest large quantities.

Ironically, some patients with ITP have a clotting problem and are also taking blood thinners. Others may have a clotting problem and not know it. The propensity to clot and medication status are important factors when considering diet choices.

- alcohol (can also reduce the number of platelets)
- aspartame (NutraSweet, can also reduce the number of platelets)
- beer (including non-alcoholic beer)
- blueberries
- chocolate (dark)
- coffee
- feverfew
- garlic
- onions
- ginkgo biloba
- ginger
- ginseng
- green tea
- guarana (a dietary supplement)
- kiwi fruit
- omega 3 fatty acids (hemp seed, fish oil)
- pycnogenol (pine bark extract)
- quercetin, rutin, and related bioflavonoids
- red/purple grape products (grape juice, red wine, raisins, grape seeds)
- red wine

- tomatoes
- vitamin E
- wood ear or cloud ear mushroom (*Auricularia auricula-judae*, used in Chinese cuisine)

Problem Foods

Some foods can cause low platelets and eliminating them from the diet may help raise the platelet count. The most common offenders are foods that contain quinine (tonic water, bitter lemon, bitter melon), aspartame (diet soda, sugar-free and low-fat candy and cakes) or alcohol (beer, wine, hard liquor).

Food Allergies and Sensitivities

Food allergies can cause a multitude of symptoms, including depression, fatigue and cell destruction, (Murray, 1998), things that plague many people with ITP. People with abnormal numbers and ratios of T-cells (a type of white blood cell), especially those with a higher percent of T-helper cells, are more prone to develop food allergies and sensitivities because they have a lower allergic set-point (Murray, 1998).

Food sensitivities vary by individual but foods that are frequently consumed or craved in the evening are likely culprits. There have been reports in the literature of low platelets caused by food sensitivities to cow's milk, tahini (sesame paste), and cranberry juice (Royer, 2010).

Foods That Increase Low Platelet Count

Pomegranate



Pomegranate is a multi faceted fruit helpful for low platelets treatment. Its rich red color is a testament to its high iron content. The fruit can help combat increasing platelet reduction with regular consumption. You can eat it raw or in juice form. The fruit is also rich in vitamins to help you keep your energy levels steady despite *having your blood platelets low in level*. Generally, you may have 150ml (5oz) of pomegranate juice daily for 2 weeks.

Folate Rich Food



Severe deficiency of folate in the body can cause a reduction in blood platelets. To combat this adopt a diet that includes *folate* rich foods. **Vitamin B9 or folate** is extremely important for healthy cell division in the body which can be a beneficial factor in the treatment for low platelet count. A healthy adult should consume at least 400 mg of folate everyday as part of their diet. Some folate rich foods include **broccoli, leafy greens, asparagus, oranges and spinach.**

Lean Proteins



Lean protein foods are excellent sources of **zinc and Vitamin B12**. These nutrients are essential to reverse the effects of thrombocytopenia. In case of reduced platelets in the body, you should switch to a diet that includes *adequate dosage* of lean proteins such as **turkey, chicken and fish**.

Papaya



The extract prepared from papaya leaves is excellent for overall blood production and **increase in platelet count**. Just put water and papaya leaves in a kettle and put it on medium heat for 10-15 minutes. The slow heat will help to slowly draw the extract from the papaya leaves. You should *boil* the solution until the liquid simmers down to half its volume. Drinking this extract twice a day can help increase blood platelets count. Take about 2 tablespoons of the juice twice a day.

Ground Flax And Flax Seed Oil



Consuming flaxseed oil can help you *strengthen* your immune system. It's considerably a significant low blood platelets treatment approach that helps combat the tendency of the body to confuse and *attack* its own, including the platelets. Many autoimmune **disorders are the leading cause of thrombocytopenia or low platelet count**. These oils reduce inflammation and improve blood circulation throughout the body. They are beneficially supporting factors but take caution for they might act as a blood thinner.

Vitamin A Rich Foods



Vitamin A is essential for healthy platelet production. This nutrient is also significant for protein formation in the body. A healthy protein regulation helps in the process of cell division and growth. This is why it is essential to consume *Vitamin A rich foods like* to sustain normal body function. Some ideal foods that belong to this group are **carrot, pumpkin, kale, liver, fish and sweet potatoes**.

Chlorophyll From Wheatgrass and Moringa



Chlorophyll has a remarkably *similar molecular structure* to that of **hemoglobin**. After all, chlorophyll is essentially commonly known as the blood of plants. This nutrient has a strong effect in overall blood production and increase of platelet count in the body. Wheatgrass juice comprises over 70% of chlorophyll. Moringa contains 4x the amount of chlorophyll of wheatgrass and it is one of the best sources of this nutrient.

Vitamin K Rich Foods



Overall *high calorie meals* are suggested for ideal production of blood platelets.

Vitamin K is a necessary ingredient that keeps cell growth at optimum levels in the body. Platelets last up to *10 days* only where a healthy quantity of platelets need to be continually produced to *replace* the lost amount in the body. **Eating eggs, liver and kale** can be highly beneficial for a plan seeking to achieve adequate Vitamin K for the body.

Supplements that increase platelets:

- Chlorocaps
- Recancostat 400
- Moringa
- Ultra Potent Vitamin C
- Mixed EFAs
- Bio-Immunozyne Forte
- Li-Zyme Forte
- Bone Strength O.P.