

# THIOGUARD® TST

EFFECTIVE, ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE TOTAL SYSTEM TREATMENT FOR MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER



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# Wake Up and Smell the Magnesium

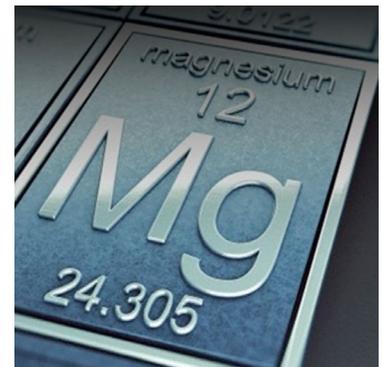
Andrea Bocelli, kale and niacin are all popular.  
Why not the crucial element of magnesium?

BY JOE QUEENAN | OCTOBER 31, 2014

There are always some things you wish that everyone in America loved as much as you do—but nobody does. Like zither music or cribbage or vastly underrated, thousand-page novels by turn-of-the-century Austrian masters.

You keep hoping that someday your personal idols will have their day in the sun: André Previn will move more merchandise than Andrea Bocelli ; Thomas Eakins will draw bigger crowds than Salvador Dalí ; Tom McGuane or Marilynne Robinson or Ron Rash will win the National Book Award, instead of somebody from Brooklyn you hate; football teams will throw the flea flicker every third play instead of every third season; and chicken vindaloo will become a staple on every fast-food menu. Competitively priced vindaloo. With spicy papadums as a side dish.

But when things like that do happen, it's always somebody else's impossible dream that finally comes true. Kale, not okra, takes America by storm. Cupcakes



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achieve global confectionery hegemony, leaving your beloved crullers and sticky buns in the dust. Judas Priest makes the big comeback, not The Blasters. Meaningless, midseason college football games draw more fans than the World Series. It all proves that somewhere along the line, America has lost its way.

Recently I read an article about the hidden health benefits of niacin, and I got to thinking: Why hasn't magnesium ever had its day in the sun? It's the eighth most common element on the face of the Earth, yet where are the drum rolls and fanfare? Magnesium is essential to maintaining nerve and muscle function, helps power the immune system, ensures that the heartbeat stays steady as she goes and even prevents bones from decaying.

Yet, nobody seems to care. Is it because magnesium has a sour taste? Or because lots of Americans have a magnesium deficiency but don't want to draw attention to it, because being magnesium deficient is less trendy than being lactose intolerant? Or what?

Niacin, potassium, riboflavin and even lowly folic acid have all had their brief shining moment of glory, as have fluoride and iron, but when was the last time anyone ever went to bat for magnesium? There was a B12 craze and a cod-liver-oil craze and a keratin-supplement phase that turned everyone in show business bright orange. Recently, everyone became convinced that kale will miraculously reverse the effects of 50 years spent slamming away Twinkies and liquor. I even seem to recall a zinc craze somewhere along the line, though it never actually came to my town. But why do we never hear anything about magnesium?

The subject of vastly underrated or unjustly overlooked people, places, books, art forms, vegetables, planets and minerals has always fascinated me. Wales is way more interesting than Sweden, but you'd never know it from reading travel magazines. Bananas wipe the floor with oranges and peaches for reliability and taste, and a good, solid pear torte makes an apple pie taste like something the cat dragged in. The planet Venus cleans the moon's clock, but you hardly ever hear anyone talking about it, because Venus keeps such a low profile. Sharon Isbin makes Eric Clapton sound like a rank amateur, but does the world's greatest female guitarist ever sell out Madison Square Garden or London's Wembley Stadium? No.

Am I suggesting that some sort of conspiracy is afoot here? No, I'm just saying that the hoopla should get spread more democratically. Taylor Swift has had enough coverage of her new album; how about giving some space to somebody less famous? We've all heard more than enough about LeBron James and Kobe Bryant; let's hear a bit more about Jabari Parker or Tony Parker or anyone named Parker.

Without magnesium, none of us would be here. Once that's acknowledged, maybe we can all start banging the drum for selenium.

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THIOGUARD® HEADQUARTERS: 300 Barr Harbor Drive, Suite 250 West Conshohocken, PA 19428