



From the Desk of
Faith Pierce
Doctor of Naturopathy



2001 West Kenosha Street
Broken Arrow OK 74012
Naturalhealthclinic.net
1-800-798-HERB

What is magnesium stearate?

Magnesium stearate, stearic acid and calcium stearate, made by hydrogenating cottonseed or palm oil, are used throughout the supplement industry as lubricants. They are added to the raw materials in supplements so that production machinery will run at maximum speeds. These fatty substances coat every particle of the nutrients, so the particles will flow rapidly. This ensures that production schedules will meet profit targets.

Cottonseed oil has the highest content of pesticide residues of all commercial oils; cotton crops are heavily sprayed. In the hydrogenation process, the oil is subjected to high heat and pressure in the presence of a metal catalyst for several hours, creating a hydrogenated saturated fat. Hydrogenated vegetable fats contain altered molecules derived from fatty acids that may be toxic. The metal catalyst used in the hydrogenation process may also contaminate the stearates produced.

While toxicity is one problem, decreased absorption is another. In a study published in the journal *Pharmaceutical Technology*, the percent dissolution for capsules after 20 minutes in solution went from 90% without stearates to 25% with stearates. This delays the absorption of nutrients. Individuals with impaired digestion may have particular difficulty absorbing nutrients coated with stearates.

Another problem with stearates: concentrated doses of stearic acid suppress the action of T-cells, a key component of the immune system. The article "Molecular basis for the immunosuppressive action of stearic acid on T-cells" appeared in the journal *Immunology* in 1990.

Dr. Faith Pierce, N.D., ©2015