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Driving Smarter Supplement Choices Through Formulation and Transparency

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Mayank Jha, Chief Executive Officer, GNC India,

As consumers increasingly prioritise sleep, stress management, muscle recovery and preventive wellness, the nutritional supplements market is witnessing growing interest in magnesium. However, greater awareness of the mineral is also prompting consumers to look beyond dosage and understand the form, bioavailability and quality of the ingredients they consume.

Against this backdrop, GNC India has introduced Magnesium PureGlycinate, positioned as a 100 per cent pure, non-buffered Magnesium Bisglycinate formulation. The launch reflects a broader shift towards transparent, science-backed and

purpose-driven supplementation, as consumers become more discerning about ingredient quality and formulation.

In this interview with NUFFOODS Spectrum, Mayank Jha, Chief Executive Officer, GNC India, discusses the consumer needs driving the company's latest magnesium offering, the importance of formulation and ingredient transparency, and how Magnesium Bisglycinate compares with other commonly used forms of magnesium. He also shares his perspective on emerging research around magnesium, evolving consumer expectations and GNC India's strategy for expanding its science-based wellness portfolio in India.

GNC India has introduced Magnesium PureGlycinate as a 100 per cent pure, non-buffered Magnesium Bisglycinate formulation. What consumer need or market gap did you identify that led to the development of this product, and how does it differentiate itself from conventional magnesium supplements available in India?

As awareness around sleep, stress management, muscle recovery, and overall wellness has grown, we noticed that many consumers were taking magnesium supplements without understanding that the form of magnesium plays a major role in how well it is absorbed and tolerated.

Many conventional magnesium supplements available in the market use magnesium oxide or buffered formulations, which do not provide the same level of absorption as magnesium bisglycinate nor do they solve for deep sleep and recovery.

With GNC Magnesium PureGlycinate, our focus was to offer a 100 per cent pure, non-buffered Magnesium Bisglycinate formulation that provides 440 mg of elemental magnesium (100 per cent RDA) per serving. Because it is a true amino acid chelate, it is designed for deeper sleep, muscle recovery, helps aid anxiety and may also provide stress relief. Additionally, it is created to support better absorption while being gentle on the stomach, making it suitable for daily supplementation.

The Indian magnesium supplements market is witnessing rapid growth, driven by increasing awareness around sleep, stress management, and recovery. How do you see consumer preferences evolving, and what role do you believe ingredient transparency and formulation quality will play in future purchasing decisions?

Consumers today are far more informed than they were a few years ago. They're no longer looking only at the amount of a nutrient on the label. They also want to know where it comes from, how it's formulated, and whether it's backed by science.

We believe ingredient transparency and formulation quality will become even more important as the category grows. People are increasingly asking questions like "What type of magnesium is this?" or "Is it well absorbed?" This shift encourages brands to be more transparent about ingredient sourcing, dosage, and formulation.

At GNC, we believe that helping consumers understand why a nutrient's form matters is just as important as providing the nutrient itself.

Your launch highlights the importance of the 'form' of magnesium rather than just the ingredient itself. Could you explain why Magnesium Bisglycinate offers advantages over other commonly used forms such as magnesium oxide, citrate, or buffered magnesium formulations, particularly in terms of bioavailability and consumer outcomes?

Magnesium never exists on its own. It is always bound to another compound, and that compound determines two things: how much your body absorbs, and what the supplement is genuinely useful for.

Magnesium oxide is roughly 60 per cent magnesium by weight, which looks impressive on a pack, but absorbs at rates as low as 4 per cent. Most passes straight through, drawing water into the gut, which is why oxide is used as a laxative. Citrate absorbs better but remains a digestive aid. Neither was built for sleep or recovery.

Buffered formulations are where consumers are most often misled. Buffering blends glycinate with cheap oxide so the elemental figure on the label rises while the cost falls. It can still be called glycinate. What you actually absorb is far lower.

Bisglycinate is different because of its structure. The magnesium is chelated, held by two molecules of glycine, so it survives stomach acid and is absorbed through amino acid pathways without competing with other minerals. The result is high bioavailability and digestive comfort. No laxative effect, which makes it suitable for nightly use.

What that delivers is twofold. The magnesium supports muscle relaxation and overnight recovery, eases cramps, and steadies the body's stress response; it is involved in over 300 processes, including nerve signalling and how easily the body settles. And glycine is not merely a carrier, it is a calming amino acid that supports a quieter mind, helps lower core

body temperature, and supports deeper, more restorative sleep.

So bisglycinate works on the body and mind at once. For sleep, stress and recovery it is the form built for the job, and it only delivers if it is pure and non-buffered.

GNC Magnesium PureGlycinate is built to a single specification: 100 per cent non-buffered bisglycinate, nothing added to inflate the number. The purity is verifiable on the label itself, pure bisglycinate is about 14 per cent elemental magnesium by weight, and our ratio sits exactly where a true chelate should.

The nutraceutical industry is increasingly focused on clean-label, science-backed formulations. How does GNC ensure the purity, efficacy, and quality of its magnesium products, and what quality control measures are in place throughout sourcing and manufacturing?

At GNC, quality is built into every stage of product development, from ingredient selection to the finished product.

GNC Magnesium PureGlycinate is formulated using 100 per cent pure, non-buffered Magnesium Bisglycinate, without blending it with lower-cost magnesium salts such as magnesium oxide. This is reflected in the product's own composition: true, non-buffered magnesium bisglycinate can only ever yield magnesium in the 12–14 per cent range by molecular weight; GNC's formulation delivers 440 mg of elemental magnesium from 3666 mg of bisglycinate, a 12 per cent yield consistent with an unadulterated, true chelate. The product is developed with a science-first approach, focusing on ingredient quality, bioavailability, and consistency.

Manufacturing follows established quality standards and quality control procedures to help ensure purity, safety, and consistency across batches. This reflects GNC's long-standing commitment to delivering supplements that consumers can trust.

Beyond supporting sleep and muscle recovery, are there emerging areas of research or future health applications for magnesium supplementation that you believe will shape product innovation in the coming years?

Sleep and muscle recovery remain some of the most recognized uses of magnesium, but research continues to explore its broader role in overall health.

Magnesium is involved in more than 300 enzymatic reactions in the body and plays an important role in energy metabolism, normal muscle and nerve function, electrolyte balance, and bone health. Emerging research is also exploring its relationship with areas such as stress resilience, cognitive health, metabolic health, and healthy aging.

As the evidence continues to grow, we believe consumers will increasingly view magnesium as an important part of a proactive wellness routine rather than a supplement used only for specific concerns.

Looking ahead, what is GNC India's broader strategy for expanding its science-based wellness portfolio in India? Are there specific consumer health segments or nutritional categories where you see significant opportunities for innovation over the next three to five years?

The Indian wellness market is evolving rapidly, with consumers becoming more proactive about preventive health and everyday nutrition. Our strategy is to continue bringing science-backed, high-quality formulations that address these changing needs.

We see significant opportunities across categories such as sleep and relaxation, stress management, women's health, healthy aging, metabolic wellness, gut health, and active lifestyle nutrition. Consumers are also becoming more interested in products with clinically studied ingredients and transparent formulations.

Going forward, GNC will continue to focus on delivering innovative, research-backed products, premium ingredients, and quality standards, while helping consumers make informed choices about their health and wellness.