



In Your Hands

Calcium - Are You Getting What You Need?

Got calcium? For many the answer is “not enough.” The human body has 206 bones. Calcium is crucial to make sure those bones are strong and healthy. Millions of Americans are at risk to develop osteoporosis, or low bone density, which can lead to an increased risk of bone fractures and a “stooped” posture as we get older. What about those pearly whites? Calcium helps you maintain a healthy smile. Calcium also helps our bodies’ nerves transmit signals, muscles contract, and blood to clot. Quite the multi-tasking mineral!

How much calcium do I need per day?

- Children 1 - 3 years need 500 mg.
- Children 4 - 8 years need 800 mg.
- Adolescents and young adults aged 9 - 18 need 1300 mg.
- Adults 19 - 50 need 1000 mg.
- Adults over 50 need 1200 mg.
- Pregnant or nursing women need 1200 - 1500 mg.



What foods are good sources of calcium? The choices might surprise you!

- Dairy products such as milk, cheese and yogurt
- Soybeans and calcium-enriched soy products such as soy milk and tofu
- Dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, turnip, beet, and collard greens
- Canned fish with edible bones such as salmon and sardines
- Calcium-enriched cereals, breads and fruit juices
- Nuts and beans such as almonds, sesame seeds, pinto and white beans



How can my family get more?

- Use dark leafy greens in your soups, casseroles, sauces, even smoothies!
- Add beans to chili, soups, salads and pasta.
- Try nuts and sesame seeds in yogurt, cereal and salads.
- Sprinkle shredded cheese on your eggs, baked potatoes and salads.
- Use low or fat free milk with oatmeal, hot cereals, cocoa mix and soup instead of water.
- Switch plain yogurt for sour cream and ricotta cheese for cream cheese.
- Be a healthy role model for your kids. They’ll eat what you eat!



Calcium supplements are available, but it is still best to get your nutrients mainly from food. Too much calcium can have negative health effects, so check with your doctor first.

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Are you getting enough calcium?

Circle foods eaten within the last 24 hours. Determine how many cups/servings you had and write it in the “Number of Cups” column. Multiply by the number of milligrams (mg) and write in the “Total mg” column. Add them up for the “Grand Total.” This is an estimate of your daily calcium intake.

<u>Foods/serving sizes</u>	<u>Number of Cups/servings</u>		<u>Total mg</u>
Milk (8 oz)	_____	x 300 mg	= _____
Plain or vanilla yogurt (8 oz)	_____	x 415 mg	= _____
Fruit-flavored yogurt (8 oz)	_____	x 365 mg	= _____
Hot cocoa, calcium-fortified (1 packet)	_____	x 300 mg	= _____
Swiss cheese (1 oz)	_____	x 270 mg	= _____
American cheese (1 oz) - most prepared slices are .75 oz	_____	x 173 mg	= _____
Mozzarella cheese (1 oz) - most cheese sticks are 1 oz	_____	x 200 mg	= _____
Cheddar cheese (1 oz)	_____	x 200 mg	= _____
Parmesan cheese (1 tablespoon)	_____	x 70 mg	= _____
Ice cream (1/2 cup)	_____	x 80 mg	= _____
Cottage cheese (1/2 cup)	_____	x 70 mg	= _____
Soy milk with added calcium (8 oz)	_____	x 300 mg	= _____
Tofu made with calcium (1/2 cup)	_____	x 205 mg	= _____
Canned sardines with bones (3 oz)	_____	x 325 mg	= _____
Canned salmon with bones (3 oz)	_____	x 180 mg	= _____
Acorn squash, cooked (1 cup)	_____	x 90 mg	= _____
Beet greens, cooked (1 cup)	_____	x 165 mg	= _____
Broccoli, cooked (1 cup)	_____	x 70 mg	= _____
Kale, chopped, cooked or raw (1 cup)	_____	x 100 mg	= _____
Spinach, raw (1 cup)	_____	x 30 mg	= _____
Spinach, cooked (1 cup)	_____	x 245 mg	= _____
Orange juice with added calcium (1 cup)	_____	x 300 mg	= _____
Pinto beans, cooked (1 cup)	_____	x 75 mg	= _____
White beans, cooked (1 cup)	_____	x 140 mg	= _____
Breakfast cereals, fortified (1 cup)	_____	x 100 mg	= _____
Instant oatmeal (1 packet)	_____	x 100 mg	= _____
Almonds, whole (1 oz)	_____	x 80 mg	= _____
Soup made with milk (1 cup)	_____	x 165 mg	= _____
Grand Total			= _____

UVM Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program helps limited resource families, their children and pregnant women learn to shop smarter, eat healthier, and save money. For more information, please contact: (802) 656-2311 or 1-877-337-5826 (toll-free in Vt.) efnep@uvm.edu

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