

Nutrition and Dietetics

Dietary advice to increase your Calcium intake

Calcium

Calcium is an essential mineral that helps to build and keep teeth and bones healthy. Calcium also helps regulate muscle contraction, including the heartbeat and makes sure blood clots normally.

Why do we need calcium?

Calcium is needed to develop and maintain strong teeth and bones. During pregnancy and breastfeeding (lactation) it is important for women to have sufficient calcium for the baby's development. Although bones stop growing at around the age of 18, the need for calcium does not significantly decrease because bones continue to grow in density until we reach our thirties.

If there is insufficient calcium in the diet, the body takes the calcium from the bones and this leads to brittle bones (osteoporosis) that break easily. Therefore, calcium is needed to prevent osteoporosis.

Requirements can be higher for certain groups where absorption is reduced such as those with coeliac disease, inflammatory bowel disease and people who are not exposed to enough sunlight.

Daily Calcium Recommendations in mg

Men	700
Women	700
Boys 11–18	1000
Girls 11–18	800
1–3 years	350
4–6 years	450
7–10 years	550
0–12 months (bottle fed only)	525
Pregnant women	700
Breastfeeding women	1250
Women post menopause	1200
Adult with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)	1000
Adult with coeliac disease	1000-1500
Men over 55 with IBD / Women post-menopause with IBD	1200

Calcium contents of food (please check labels as calcium content may vary with brand)

Milk and Milk products:	Average serving	mg
Rice pudding	200g	200
Cheese low fat (hard)	30g	250
Milk skimmed	200ml	248
Milk semi-skimmed	200ml	240
Milk whole	200ml	236
Cheddar cheese	30g	220
Custard from powder	140g	196
Custard pot	125g	133
Skimmed milk powder	15g	190
Yoghurt - low fat fruit	125g	175
Yoghurt - fruit	125g	153
Cheese spread - 2 triangles	30g	149
Cottage cheese	90g	110
Ice cream - 1 scoop	60g	60
Soya milk calcium-enriched	200ml	200
Soya milk	200ml	25
Ice cream non-dairy - 1 scoop	61g	45
Alpro soya custard	125g	150
Alpro soya yogurt	125g	150

Milk substitute	Average serving	mg
Coconut	200ml	240
Soya	200ml	240
Almond	200ml	240
Oat	200ml	240
Hazelnut (Alpro)	200ml	240
Rice	200ml	240
Hemp	200ml	240

Cereal Products - All Cereal Dry	Average serving	mg
White/brown bread	1 slice	62
Wholemeal bread	1 slice	37
Hovis Best of Both	1 slice	191
Burgen Soya and Linseed bread	1 slice	121
Ready Brek	40g	536
Muesli	60g	66
Special K	30g	21
Coco pops	30g	137
Cheerios	30g	152
Cookie Crisp	30g	219
Golden Nuggets	30g	138
Golden grahams	30g	140
Nutri-grain bar	37g	137

Meat, Fish and Alternatives:	Average serving	mg
Sardines including bones (tinned)	100g	400
Pilchards	100g	250
Tofu (soya bean curd)	50g	75-250
Tinned salmon	100g	80
Baked beans	150g	80
Kidney beans	100g	70
Sesame seeds/Tahini	10g	67
Almonds	25g	60
Chick peas	100g	46
Brazil nuts	25g	45
Hazelnuts	25g	35
Egg – 1	50g	30
Peanuts	40g	24

Fruit and Vegetables:	Average serving	mg
Figs, dried - 3	75g	180
Orange – 1 medium	150g	75
Apricot Dried – 4	30g	25
Currants -1 tablespoon	25g	25
Okra stir-fried	100g	220
Spinach, boiled	100g	160
Curly kale,	100g	150
Watercress	60g	100
Spring greens, boiled	100g	75
Broccoli, boiled	100g	40

Miscellaneous:	Average serving	mg
Ovaltine powder (dry)	25g	204
Horlicks powder (dry)	25g	478
Horlicks light malt instant powder (dry)	32g	598
Ovaltine chocolate light powder (dry)	20g	200
Horlicks light instant chocolate powder (dry)	32g	908
Hot chocolate light powder (dry)	20g	200
Cinammon, ground - 1 teaspoon	3g	37
Curry powder - 1 teaspoon	3g	19
Mixed herbs, dried - 1 teaspoon	1g	17
Thyme, dried - 1 teaspoon	1g	19
Sage, dried - 1 teaspoon	1g	17

Other factors to help build healthy bones

A Healthy Lifestyle

As well as getting enough calcium in your diet, other factors help to keep your bones healthy:

- Vitamin D helps your body to absorb calcium from foods. We get most of our vitamin D from the action of sunlight on our skin. Therefore, it is important to spend some time outdoors (taking care not to get sunburnt). We get the rest of our vitamin D from food. Some foods that contain vitamin D include liver, oily fish (salmon, mackerel and sardines), eggs, meat, butter, cheese and margarine. It is advised that everyone in the UK above the age of one should have 10 micrograms of vitamin D per day. As Vitamin D is found only in a small number of foods, it might be difficult to get enough from foods that naturally contain Vitamin D and/or fortified foods alone. So everyone, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10µg of Vitamin D.
- Between late March/April to the end of September, the majority of people aged five years and above will probably obtain sufficient Vitamin D from sunlight when they are outdoors. So you might choose not to take a Vitamin D supplement during these months.
- The Department of Health recommends that people should take a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D throughout the year if they are not often outdoors, such as those who are frail or housebound; are in an institution such as a care home; usually wear clothes that cover up most of their skin when outdoors. For example; people from minority ethnic groups with dark skin, such as those of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian origin.

- Exercise - Weight-bearing exercise such as walking, dancing, and 'keep fit' helps to build strong bones, as well as having many other benefits to your health.
- Avoid smoking - Smoking can damage bone-building cells and cause early menopause in women.
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol or coffee. If you have osteoporosis, limit coffee or caffeine-containing drinks to two cups a day. Try to drink no more than 14 units of alcohol per week. Alcohol reduces the absorption of calcium and vitamin D.
- Salt - Eating too much salt makes your body lose calcium through your kidneys. Reducing your intake of salt and salty foods will help to reduce calcium losses.

Women who are going through or who have completed the menopause are at greater risk of osteoporosis, where bones become 'thin' and fragile. They need to take special note of all the advice in this leaflet.

You should be able to get all the calcium you need by eating a varied and balanced diet. If you are finding it difficult to meet the calcium requirements from your diet you may need a calcium supplement. If you decide to take calcium supplements it is a good idea not to take too much. It is recommended that the total daily intake of calcium should be less than 2000mg. Discuss this with your doctor, pharmacist or dietitian.

Dietitians:

Calderdale Royal Hospital (01422) 224267 Huddersfield Royal Infirmary (01484) 342749

National Osteoporosis Society www.nos.org.uk

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

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If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Amenyiben ezt az információót más formátumban vagy nyelven szeretné megkapni, vegye fel a kapcsolatot fenti részlegünkkel.

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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