

## Why do we need calcium?

Calcium is needed for our heart, muscles, and nerves to function properly as well as for **strong bones**.

99% of the body's calcium supply is stored in the **bones and teeth**, where it supports their structure and function.

Low calcium intakes over the long-term can lead to **low bone mass** (osteopenia) and increase the risk of **osteoporosis** and **bone fractures**.

### Reading the Nutrition Facts Label

30% DV of calcium equals 300 mg.

20% DV of calcium equals 200 mg of calcium.

15% DV of calcium equals 150 mg of calcium

# Calcium

I U Health Goshen Nutrition

Inadequate calcium intake is more of a concern for:

- All females aged 4 & older
- Particularly adolescent girls
- Males aged 9-18 years
- Men older than 51 years

Here are ways to add more calcium to your diet:

- Grab a 6 oz. yogurt cup as a snack.
- Sprinkle low-fat cheese on a salad or sandwich.
- If choosing a dairy alternative, make sure that it's calcium fortified,

it should have  $\geq 30\%$  calcium on the nutrition facts label.

- Learn to love leafy greens. Include broccoli, kale, bok choy, and spinach.
- Snack on 1 oz. of almonds.
- Try calcium-fortified orange juice or calcium-fortified cereal for breakfast.

## Calcium Absorption

The amount of calcium in a food may be different than that the amount actually absorbed by the body. The amount of calcium absorbed from plant foods is affected by their content of oxalate and phytate. These compounds decrease calcium absorption. Spinach, rhubarb, and sweet potatoes generally have a low absorption of calcium due to their oxalate content. On the other hand, low-oxalate vegetables, such as kale, broccoli, and bok choy have a higher absorption. Generally, calcium from fortified foods or supplements is absorbed well, similar to that of milk.

Many people do not get enough calcium from food, including:

- Boys aged 9-13
- Girls aged 9-18 years
- Women older than 50
- Men older than 70 years

## Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA)

**Infants 0-6 months:** 200mg

**Infants 6-12 months:** 260 mg

**1-3 yrs.** 700mg

**4-8 yrs.** 1,000mg

**9-18 yrs.** 1300mg

**19-50 yrs.** 1,000mg

**51-70 yr. male:** 1,000mg

**51-70 yr. female:** 1200mg

**71+ yrs.** 1200mg

# Calcium-Content of Foods

Food	Milligrams (mg) per serving	Percent Daily Value*
Yogurt, plain, low fat 6 ounces	335	34
Sardines, canned in oil, with bones 3 ounces	325	33
Milk, 8 ounces	276-300	28-30
Yogurt, fruit, low-fat, 6 ounces	235-288	23-29
Cheese: mozzarella, provolone, jack, Swiss, 1 ounce	222	22
Cheddar cheese, 1 ounce	205	20
Cheese: ricotta, part skim, 1/2 cup	335	34
Soy milk, almond or rice milk, calcium-fortified, 8 ounces	300	30
Orange-juice calcium-fortified, 6 oz.	261	26
Tofu, soft, made with calcium sulfate, 1/2 cup	253	25
Salmon, canned with bones, 3 oz.	180	18
Soybeans, cooked, 1/2 cup	130	13
Greens: collards, turnip, or bok choy, 1/2 cup cooked	100-135	10-14
Cottage cheese, 2%, 4 oz.	105	10
Ready-to-eat cereal, calcium-fortified, 1 cup	100-1,000	10-100
Kale fresh (raw or cooked), 1 cup	94-100	8-9
Almonds, 1 oz	75	8
Dried beans and peas, 1/2 cup cooked	50-100	5-10
Bread, white, 1 slice	73	7
Tortilla, corn, 6-inch diameter	46	5
Bread, whole wheat, 1 slice	30	3

## Calcium Supplements

- If you have trouble eating enough calcium from foods, supplements can help to meet daily recommended intakes.
- May be recommended for post-menopausal women, vegans, and those who are lactose intolerant.
- There are two main forms of calcium supplements: calcium carbonate and calcium citrate.
- Calcium carbonate is better absorbed when taken with food.
- Calcium citrate can be taken with or without food. This form may also be useful for people with achlorhydria, inflammatory bowel disease, or absorption disorder.
- Calcium is best absorbed when taken in small doses, so take 500mg or less at one time to maximize absorption.

\*The percent daily value is based on 1,000mg.