

# Calcium

## Calcium Requirements

Age	Daily calcium requirement
4 to 8	800 mg
9 to 18	1300 mg
19 to 50	1000 mg
50+	1200 mg
Pregnant or lactating women 18+	1000 mg

## Tips to maximize your calcium intake:

1. Get an adequate amount of calcium every day
  - Consult a reliable food chart of calcium content of specific foods.
  - Calculate your daily calcium intake to see if you are achieving enough calcium.

## 2. Eat foods that contain calcium that is easily absorbed

- Dairy products (milk, cheese and yogurt).
- Skim milk products provide as much calcium as whole milk but with less fat and cholesterol.
- Some calcium fortified soy beverages and orange juice.
- Vegetables (beets, bok choy, okra).
- Fish products containing bones (canned salmon and sardines).
- Meat alternatives (lentils and beans).

## 3. Pay attention to foods that cause calcium loss

- Calcium loss through urine is increased by consumption of excess **salt** and **caffeine**.
- Over 90% sodium comes from *food* rather than table salt.
- 2-3 cups of coffee or cola per day is probably not detrimental if calcium intake is adequate.
- If you consume over 4 cups a day, have at least 1 glass of milk for every cup of caffeine.

# Vitamin D

Osteoporosis Canada's new guidelines (July 2010) for daily supplements:

- 400 – 1000 IU for adults under age 50 *without* osteoporosis or conditions affecting vitamin D absorption.
- For adults over 50, supplements of between 800 and 2000 IU are recommended.

**A daily supplement of 800 IU is the minimum dose for adults *with* osteoporosis, regardless of age and doses up to 2000 IU are often recommended.**

Vitamin D has two roles:

1. Helps to maintain bone, contributing to the prevention of osteoporosis.
2. Benefits muscle health, leading to fall prevention.

Vitamin D is found in very few foods. Besides fortified milk and margarine, other food sources are:

- fortified orange juice, soy and rice beverages
- egg yolks
- chicken livers
- fatty fish (salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel and swordfish) and fish oils (halibut and cod liver oils) all contain small amounts.

Since it is very difficult to get enough vitamin D from food alone, supplements may be advised. Speak to your doctor about supplementation prior to taking any.