

# Just the Facts...

## Calcium!

Did you know that the human body contains more calcium than any other mineral? Astonishingly, 150-pound adult body contains approximately three pounds of calcium!

### Calcium is Important:

You've probably heard that calcium intake is important during the adolescent years. But did you know that calcium is important for adults' bones, too? Between ages 20 and 35, bones build to their peak mass. This means that bones become stronger and denser during these years as calcium is added to the bone.



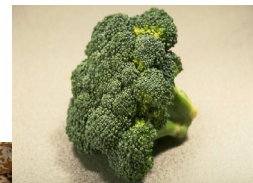
### Lack of Calcium is Serious:

If you don't consume enough calcium, or if your body isn't absorbing it properly (maybe because of a lack of vitamin D), your body may withdraw more calcium from the bones than it deposits. Over time this can make the bones porous and fragile, which can lead to a condition known as osteoporosis.

### Calcium Foods Taste Good!

Need to eat more calcium-rich foods? Try these tasty ways to boost your calcium intake.

- Order a skim latte or cappuccino instead of plain coffee. A 12 oz. latte contains 412 mg of calcium.
- Choose fruits and vegetables with more calcium. Eat mustard, collard, or turnip greens, broccoli, dried beans, bok choy, dried fruit, and fortified fruit juices.
- Add tofu to your meals. Tofu can easily be mixed into salads, stir-fries, sandwiches, casseroles, soups, and smoothies.
- Snack on a part-skim mozzarella cheese stick for calcium and protein.
- Try a smoothie. Blend together yogurt, milk, fortified fruit juice, ice, and fruit for a tasty drink.



## Calcium Supplementation

### Selecting a calcium supplement



**Read the label.** All over-the-counter supplements are not the same.

- First, the calcium amount differs. Multivitamin/mineral supplements don't have as much calcium as calcium supplements do. Calcium is a bulky mineral, and the body requires a relatively large amount of it, so it's hard to fit into a multivitamin/mineral pill.
- Some forms of calcium are absorbed better than others. Choose calcium phosphate, citrate, or gluconate over calcium carbonate or oyster shell calcium.
- Make sure that the calcium supplement you choose contains vitamin D. Vitamin D is necessary for the body's absorption of calcium.
- Avoid calcium supplements with dolomite or bonemeal, which might contain lead, arsenic, mercury, or cadmium.



## Tips for maximum calcium absorption

- Take your calcium supplement with food. Your body will absorb it better.
- Take 2 or 3 low-dose calcium supplements throughout the day (for instance, in 300 to 500-milligram doses). The body can more easily absorb calcium in doses of less than 500 mg.

## Warnings

- Drink plenty of water with your calcium supplement to avoid constipation.
- Tell your pharmacist and doctor that you take calcium supplements. Calcium can interact with medications and change their effectiveness.
- Many nutrients help the body build strong bones. Calcium supplements are not a substitute for eating a wide variety of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and heart-healthy fats.
- Calcium supplements cannot protect your bones from the damage done by smoking and lack of weight-bearing exercises.



## Calcium recommendations

Adults between the ages of 18 and 50 should eat 1000 milligrams (mg) of calcium per day.

## Calcium Content of Selected Food

### Protein

	Serving Size	Calcium (mg)
Almonds	1 ounce	80
Black beans	½ cup cooked	25
Tahini	2 Tbs.	130
Tempeh	¼ cup	40
Tofu, processed with calcium	½ cup	200-300
TVP	½ cup rehydrated	85
Soybean nuts	½ cup	120-230

### Fortified Foods

	Serving Size	Calcium (mg)
Corn flakes	1 ounce	190
Energy bar	1 bar	100-500
Orange juice	½ cup	300
Soy milk	1 cup	250-300



### Fruit

	Serving Size	Calcium (mg)
Figs	5	135
Orange	1	52

### Vegetables

	Serving Size	Calcium (mg)
Bok choy	½ cup cooked	80
Broccoli	½ cup raw	50
Collard greens	½ cup cooked	180
Kale	½ cup cooked	60
Mustard greens	½ cup cooked	75
Okra	½ cup cooked	90
Spinach	1 cup raw	55
Turnip greens	½ cup cooked	125