



# Calcium for Your Family

## Why do adults need calcium?

Most of the calcium in your body is found in your bones. Calcium is important for keeping bones strong and healthy throughout life. Calcium from your diet is used for other important functions, like blood clotting and keeping a steady heartbeat. If you do not consistently get enough calcium from your diet, your body will take calcium from your bones. This may cause bones to weaken over time.



Doctors and nutritionists recommend choosing low-fat and fat-free milk and milk products. These have the same calcium, protein, vitamins and minerals as whole or full-fat products but with fewer calories.

## Why do kids need calcium?

Calcium is important for building healthy bones during childhood and adolescence. If your kids and teens get enough calcium when they are young, this will help their bones stay strong as they get older.

Calcium is sometimes added to breakfast cereals and orange juice. Check the Nutrition Facts label to be sure.



## What foods should my family choose for healthy bones?

Many foods give you calcium. Dairy foods often give you the most calcium per serving. Make sure to include foods from the chart below every day to get enough calcium for strong, healthy bones.

## How much calcium does my family need?

### If you are ... You need ...

1-3 years old ..... 700 milligrams



4-8 years old ..... 1000 milligrams



9-18 years old ..... 1300 milligrams



19-50 years old ..... 1000 milligrams



51+ years old ..... 1000-1200 milligrams



### 300 milligrams

Milk – 1 cup  
Lactose-free milk – 1 cup  
Dry milk (reconstituted) – 1 cup  
Buttermilk – 1 cup  
Evaporated milk – ½ cup

### 200 milligrams

Cheese – 1 ounce  
Yogurt – 6 ounces  
Canned salmon – 3 ounces



### 100 milligrams

Cottage cheese – ½ cup  
Beans – 1 cup

## Go for Dairy!

Dairy foods are a healthy choice because they give you calcium and vitamin D for bone health. Vitamin D is important because it helps the body take in calcium. Dairy foods also provide other important nutrients, like potassium and magnesium for healthy blood pressure and protein for muscle growth.



### Give your family a calcium check-up.

Make sure you and your kids are getting their fair share of calcium. Check the things your family typically does each day and get some new ideas!

- ☐ Start the day with cereal and milk.



- ☐ Grab milk at lunch instead of a soft drink.

- ☐ Make soups and pancakes with milk.



- ☐ Order milk at the drive-thru instead of a soft drink.

- ☐ Use plain yogurt instead of sour cream.



## Drink Milk with Your Kids!

A glass of milk at breakfast, lunch, and dinner is one of the easiest ways to get all the bone-building calcium you need. If mom or dad drinks milk, kids are more likely to do the same. Flavored milk, yogurt and cheese are great sources of calcium, too. Set a good example of healthy eating by including plenty of dairy in your diet.

- ☐ Grab chocolate milk or a yogurt cup for a quick snack.



- ☐ Eat cheese on a sandwich or salad at lunch.



- ☐ Bake a potato and top it with grated cheese and cooked veggies.



If you checked three or more boxes, you and your kids are doing a great job of getting enough calcium.

If you checked only one or two boxes, keep working with your family so they get more calcium each day.

- ☐ Drink milk at dinner.



- ☐ Serve chocolate or vanilla pudding made with milk for dessert.



The Nutrition Education People

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