

# Calcium Connection

Healthy bodies one generation to another



## Calcium status

- | Yes                   | No                    |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do you eat less than 3 servings of milk and milk products every day? (1 serving = 1 cup milk or yogurt, or 1.5 ounces of cheese) |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do you often diet to lose weight?  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do you get less than 15 minutes of sun exposure without sunscreen daily?   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do you have a blood relative who has or had osteoporosis (brittle bones) or a broken hip?  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do you have a family history of high blood pressure, colon cancer, or obesity?   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Are you physically active less than 30 minutes a day or fewer than five days a week?   |

The more you answered **"Yes,"** the more important it is to make sure you are getting enough calcium in your diet. Some things, like family history, you can't change, but you can get enough calcium from the foods you eat and drink every day.

# How high-calcium foods help your body

What benefits are most important to you?

## Build strong bones and teeth.

High-calcium foods help build peak bone mass and slow the natural loss that can lead to broken bones. It also lowers your risk of developing osteopenia or osteoporosis.

## Lower your blood pressure.

Aim for a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products with reduced saturated and total fat. Taking this approach works as well as some medications to lower blood pressure.

## Lifelong health

Everyone (girls, boys, women and men from age 9 on) benefits from 3 servings of excellent calcium foods each day to reach the recommendation of 1000 – 1300 mg calcium.

**Manage your weight.** Getting 3 servings of milk and milk products each day can help you manage your weight and lower your body fat.

## Keep your heart healthy.

This critical mineral helps you to contract muscles and regulate your heart beat.

**Decrease your risk of some types of cancer.** Calcium in foods may slow down the growth of cells that lead to cancer.



Take the quiz on the next page to find out if you are getting enough calcium for strong bones and a healthy body.

# What's your calcium score?

Think of everything you ate and drank yesterday. Write down how many points you earned based on the servings you had of each. Did you eat less than 1 serving? Give yourself a portion of the points. For example, if you had ½ cup of milk on cereal, give yourself 3 points instead of 6 points.

## Excellent Sources of Calcium

One serving = 300mg calcium

<b>1 cup (8 ounces)</b>	<b>6 points</b>
Milk: plain or flavored*	<input type="text"/>
Yogurt: plain or flavored	<input type="text"/>
Milkshake, hot chocolate, coffee drinks, such as lattes	<input type="text"/>
Desserts with milk: pudding, custard	<input type="text"/>
Calcium-fortified soy, rice or almond beverages	<input type="text"/>
<b>1.5 oz. or 1/3 c shredded</b>	<b>6 points</b>
Hard cheese	<input type="text"/>
Low-fat cheese	<input type="text"/>
Mozzarella	<input type="text"/>
Processed cheese, 2 ounces	<input type="text"/>
<b>1 large piece</b>	<b>6 points</b>
Lasagna	<input type="text"/>
Enchilada	<input type="text"/>
Sardines with bones, 6 pieces	<input type="text"/>
Tofu processed with calcium, 4 ounces	<input type="text"/>

## Good Sources of Calcium

One serving = 100mg calcium

<b>1/2 cup</b>	<b>2 points</b>
Cottage cheese	<input type="text"/>
Bok choy	<input type="text"/>
Ice cream, frozen yogurt	<input type="text"/>
Sour cream, 1/4 cup	<input type="text"/>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>2 points</b>
Beans: dried, refried, baked	<input type="text"/>
Cream soup	<input type="text"/>
Macaroni & cheese	<input type="text"/>
Broccoli or peas	<input type="text"/>
Dark leafy greens: spinach, kale, mustard greens, turnip greens	<input type="text"/>
	<b>2 points</b>
Almonds, 1/4 cup	<input type="text"/>
Corn tortillas, 2	<input type="text"/>
Figs, 5 pieces	<input type="text"/>
Canned fish with bones, 2 ounces (salmon, mackerel)	<input type="text"/>

**Excellent calcium score:**

+

**Good Calcium score:**

**Total Calcium score:**

\*Calcium the same for all fat levels (non-fat, low-fat, 2% or whole)

## How did you score?

**18 OR MORE: Calcium Champ!** You are doing a great job meeting your calcium needs. Keep this up every day.

**12-17 POINTS: Pour one more!** Add 1 more excellent source of high-calcium foods like an extra cup of milk or a yogurt daily to reach your goal.

**11 OR LESS: Room to grow;** you're short on your calcium. Add 2 or more servings of milk or milk products from the excellent source section.

# How can you get enough calcium?



1. To help plan what foods you will eat and drink to get more calcium, look again at the lists of excellent and good sources of calcium foods on page 3.
2. Think about the times and places where it will be easiest to include these foods throughout the day.
3. Ideas! Circle what you would eat.

**Breakfast:** cereal and milk, fruit smoothie with milk or yogurt, whole-grain English muffin with egg and cheese

**Lunch:** bean & cheese burrito, slice of cheese on a sandwich or salad

**Snack:** yogurt, pudding, almonds, cheese on broccoli

**Dinner:** shredded cheese on vegetables, canned salmon or beans on your salad

**Anytime:** glass of milk with your meal or snack

4. Take a minute and make a plan. This will help you include calcium-rich foods you like in your meals and snacks every day! For more ideas, visit [MealsMatter.org](http://MealsMatter.org).



**Food I can eat or drink to get more calcium:**

Food: \_\_\_\_\_

When: \_\_\_\_\_

Food: \_\_\_\_\_

When: \_\_\_\_\_

I will start this: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

A quick and easy way to reach your calcium recommendations is by eating 3 servings of milk & milk products each day.

# What else do I need to consider?

## Supplements

Supplements don't take the place of food. They can help to boost calcium intake, especially if your doctor recommends them or your appetite is small.

However, they don't provide the complete package of nutrients your body needs for strong bones and good health. If you take a supplement, read the label carefully. Taking more than 2,500 mg a day of calcium may lead to long-term health problems.



## Vegetarian diets

If you consume milk and milk products, you should have no problem getting enough calcium. If you are vegan, pay attention to calcium sources and serving sizes on page 3 that will fit what you eat. For example, you will need 3 cups of broccoli or 3 cups of beans to equal one serving of milk, yogurt or cheese.

## Fortified foods

These are foods that have calcium added, but may not provide the complete nutrient package found in foods naturally rich in calcium. The amount of calcium and how it is absorbed can vary a lot, especially among different brands of drinks. Check the labels carefully.



## Dieting

Often, people restrict foods or food groups to lose weight. Calcium, specifically from milk and milk products, may help you maintain a healthy weight and have less body fat than diets that are low in calcium and milk products.



## Lactose intolerance

Some people have stomach discomfort from the lactose in milk. Good news: you may still be able to eat and drink moderate amounts of milk and milk products. Ideas to try:

- Drink milk and eat milk products with meals. Start with  $\frac{1}{2}$  a cup of milk at a meal and work up to 1 cup of milk with a meal.
- Try yogurt and hard cheeses, which have less lactose and are easier to digest.
- Drink lactose-reduced milk.
- Chew tablets that help reduce lactose at mealtimes.



## Milk allergy

True milk allergies are rare. Consult your health care provider if you think you have a milk allergy. Don't self diagnose and cut out milk and milk products if it's not necessary. You would be missing out on important nutrients!



# Grow to your potential

Upper Elementary through High School

Think of your bones as a savings account, where you put as much calcium as possible into your account so that you can use it later in life.

Your savings account to build your bones is only open from around age 9 to 30. Build your bones now to keep them strong for the rest of your life.



## Unsafe dieting

If your friends or you are concerned that your eating habits may be unhealthy, get advice from a family member or your doctor.

### Why not diet?

- Teens who diet or cut back too much on what they eat may be more likely to be overweight as adults.
- You could create a lack of important nutrients that could harm your health, even if you don't see it now.
- Create a healthy relationship with food, and it will last you a lifetime.

Eat regular meals, eat from all food groups, eat a wide variety of foods that you enjoy in moderation.



## Closing the calcium gap

9 out of 10 girls and 6 out of 10 boys aren't getting enough calcium in the foods they eat and drink, and this leads to greater risk of broken bones.

### Do you:

- Drink soda, sweet teas or fruit drinks instead of milk?
- Avoid excellent sources of calcium foods or beverages because you believe they are too high in fat or calories?

Good news: You can get the calcium you need without a lot of extra fat, sugar or calories. Choose low-fat or fat-free options from the chart on page 3.

## Strategies for your success

You are building the foundation for a lifetime of strong bones right now.

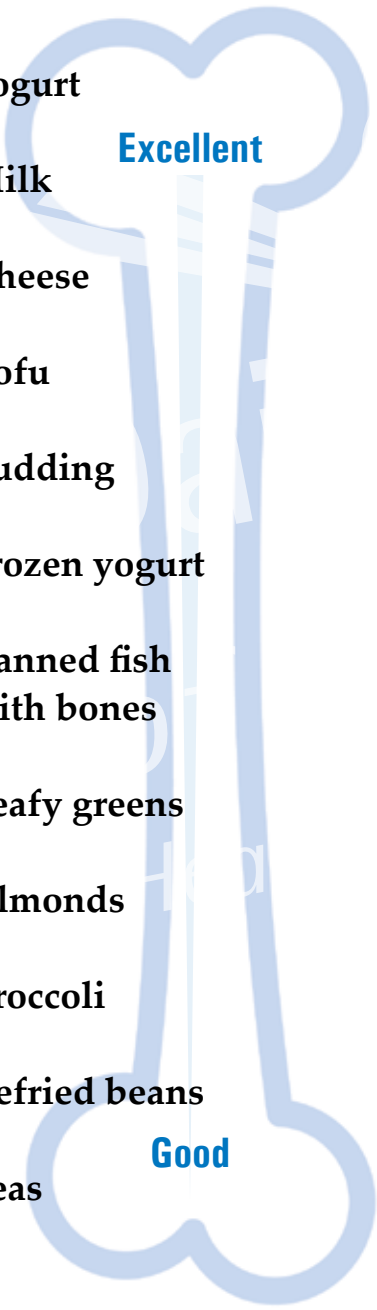


### Check at least 2 habits you can do to stay healthy:

- Eat an excellent-calcium source food at breakfast daily.
- Drink milk with meals.
- Aim to be active at least 60 minutes every day.
- Participate in bone-building activities 10 - 20 minutes 3 days a week like running, aerobics, tennis or jumping rope as part of your daily 60 minutes to build strong bones.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Shopping List

Food rich in calcium I can choose: (excellent to good sources of calcium):

- 
- Yogurt
  - Milk
  - Cheese
  - Tofu
  - Pudding
  - Frozen yogurt
  - Canned fish with bones
  - Leafy greens
  - Almonds
  - Broccoli
  - Refried beans
  - Peas



## Cherry Yogurt Parfaits

### Ingredients:

2 cups fresh or frozen berries, divided

16 ounces vanilla yogurt, divided

1 cup graham cracker crumbs (about 16 squares), divided

### Preparation:

Combine berries and 16 oz of yogurt; place about 2 tablespoons each in six parfait glasses. Top each with 1 - 2 tablespoons of the graham cracker crumbs, about 2 tablespoons berries and about 2 tablespoons yogurt. Divide remaining cracker crumbs and berries/yogurt mixture between parfait glasses.



## Apple Bagel Sandwich

### Ingredients:

1/2 Whole wheat bagel (or bagel of your choice)

1 Slice Cheddar cheese

1 Apple (green is better)

A dash of Cinnamon

### Preparation:

Slice the apple so that you make a round apple slice. Next, put the slice of cheese on top of the bagel half. Place the apple slice on top of the cheese and sprinkle some cinnamon on top of the apple.

Bake on a cookie sheet in the oven for 5 to 10 minutes at 350 degrees, but watch to make sure you don't burn it. It's done when the cheese starts to melt.

# Maximize your calcium scores

20's through 40's



During teen and young-adult years, your bones became as strong as they'll ever be. In your 20's and 30's, you need to begin to keep your peak bone mass as high as you can for the rest of your life. In your 40's you need

to maintain bone strength, before the loss of bone that comes for women with menopause. How? Get 3 servings of milk & dairy foods every day to make sure your bones keep the calcium they already have.

## You set the example: Make it a good one!

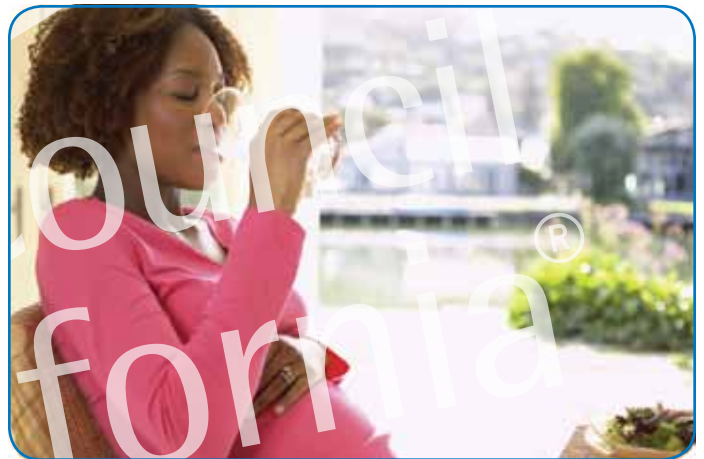
If you prepare family meals, include foods that are excellent sources of calcium at every meal, and keep them available for snacks as well. Also, be sure to set a good example by eating excellent sources of calcium foods and getting regular physical activity. Studies show that teen girls drink more milk each day if their mom drinks milk. They'll do as you do... not as you say!



## Pregnancy: A healthy time for your body

During pregnancy, your body does an even better job of storing calcium—as long as you get plenty of calcium-rich foods every day. At least 3 servings a day may also help prevent the high blood pressure that sometimes occurs during pregnancy.

If you breastfeed, you need the same amount of calcium as you did when you were pregnant to make sure you have enough calcium for your baby's milk and to keep your bones strong.



## Strategies for success

Keep your bones strong. Look at page 3 for more choices to increase your calcium. Check at least 2 things you can do to keep you and your family healthy:

- Drink milk or eat yogurt at breakfast daily.
- Choose snacks from the excellent-calcium food list.
- Participate in weight-bearing activities like jogging, walking, aerobics, stair climbing or tennis 3 days a week, plus resistance training that includes all muscle groups 2 days a week, as part of your daily 30 - 60 minutes.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

# Minimize your calcium losses

50's and older

During the first few years after menopause, your bones naturally begin to lose their strength because of lower estrogen levels. Estrogen, along with calcium from food and weight-bearing physical activity, helps preserve your bone mass.

About 5 years after menopause, loss of bone calcium slows down, but it is still important to get 3 servings of milk and milk products each day. Food sources of calcium are best, as they provide other important nutrients that can help your body better use calcium.

## Should I still exercise?

Absolutely! Weight-bearing activities can include stair climbing, hiking, walking, Pilates and dancing. For most people, regular brisk walking is ideal because it can be done anywhere—even at the mall.

If you haven't been active for years, start at a level comfortable for you. Work up to 30 minutes of activity most days of the week. Lifting weights or using strength-training machines can also strengthen your bones and help you maintain your balance and your muscles. If your bone health is poor, it helps to improve your balance to help prevent falls. Talk to your health care provider about what's right for you.

## Strategies for success

Calcium intake is as important now as ever. Look back on page 3 for ideas of how to boost your calcium. You may be eating less food each day, so each choice really has to count! Check at least 2 things you can do to keep you healthy:

- Drink milk or eat yogurt at breakfast daily.
- Choose snacks from the excellent-calcium food list.
- Drink milk with meals.
- Participate in appropriate physical activities. If you have good bone health, include weight-bearing activities like jogging, walking, aerobics, stair climbing or tennis 3 days a week, along with resistance training that includes all muscle groups 2 days a week, as part of your daily 30 - 60 minutes.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



# Calcium and wellness

## Physical activity

Activity is important for strong bones. Any activity that puts weight on your bones will help grow and maintain strong bones.

Which of these weight-bearing activities can or do you do at least 3 times each week? Check all that apply:

- Walking
- Jogging
- Dancing
- Tennis
- Yoga
- Stair climbing
- Team sports (soccer, tennis, softball, basketball)



Also include weight-training activities 2 times a week. Remember: Be active at least 30 minutes most days within your abilities! Choosing activities you really enjoy will help you better reach your goals.

## Vitamin D

Your body needs vitamin D to:

- Absorb calcium
- Build and keep strong bones and teeth
- Keep your immune system strong
- Lower blood pressure

Your body can make vitamin D from sunlight. Yet, it's still important to wear sunscreen. Good sources of vitamin D include:

- Fortified low-fat milk
- Fortified yogurt
- Fatty fish like salmon, tuna and sardines

## Osteoporosis

How can you help develop strong, healthy bones and prevent developing brittle bones?

- Get regular weight-bearing physical activity.
- Eat foods that are excellent sources of calcium.



## Check yourself periodically

The Calcium Quiz is a FREE, easy way to recheck your calcium intake. You can even suggest that your children or parents do the same! [DairyCouncilofCA.org/Caquiz](http://DairyCouncilofCA.org/Caquiz)

## Pass it on!

Share this booklet with your family and friends. Don't forget that boys and men of all ages can also learn how to have healthy bodies by reading this.



# Calcium: strong bones for life



This program, brought to you by Dairy Council of California, aligns with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines.

## My calcium plan

My calcium score on page 3:

My calcium goal:

Calcium foods you wrote down on page 4 to reach your goal:

## My health goals

Go back and look at the inside pages to create two small steps for better health.

**Idea:** I will trade for a high-calcium food as a snack, such as a glass of milk instead of a sweetened drink.

1.

2.

I will start my goals:

(date)