

Nutrition and Osteoporosis

By © June Kaminski, MSN PhD(c)

It is now a quite well known fact that a balanced diet can help you and your family prevent chronic disease. One of the most serious and damaging diseases that usually occurs in mid-life and in the elderly years is osteoporosis. This disease is more prevalent in women, but men do get it. Osteoporosis can be prevented or reduced significantly with balanced diet, regular exercise and fresh air, and a supportive social network.



Osteoporosis Prevention

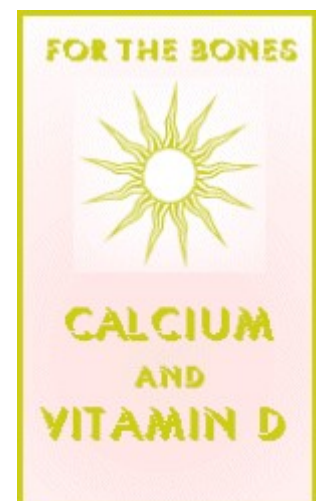
The best form of calcium is food sources, simply because bone, like other tissues, requires balanced nutrition. In particular, milk is the best food source of vitamin D, a nutrient essential for normal calcium absorption and bone health. Milk and dairy products, such as cheese, yogurt and ice cream, contain the highest levels of calcium. Although many people tend to avoid milk because of its fat content, which might predispose them to heart disease, especially those with hypercholesterolemia, low-fat dairy products such as skim and 1% milk are safe and contain high levels of calcium.

Nondairy food sources of calcium generally contain much lower levels, but significant amounts occur in canned salmon and sardines when the bones are also eaten. Some green vegetables (such as kale, broccoli and spinach) as well as legumes (such as soybeans and common beans) have small amounts of calcium, but it is not easy to assimilate.

Vegetarians who do not consume milk products should take special care to ensure that they are receiving adequate amounts of calcium in their diets. Some people will find it hard to obtain the recommended amounts of dietary calcium through diet alone; for many, a combination of food sources and vitamin/mineral supplements is wise.

Daily Requirements of Calcium

Age (yrs)	Intake (mg)
7 to 9	700
10 to 12 boys	900
10 to 12 girls	1200 to 1400
13 to 16	1200 to 1400
17 to 18	1200
19 to 49	1000
50+	1000 to 1500



Adequate amounts of vitamin D are also needed for optimal calcium absorption and bone health. Although many families obtain sufficient vitamin D through the exposure to sunlight, adequate dietary sources of vitamin D are particularly important for elderly people or for those who use sun screen preparations routinely. A dietary intake of 400 to 800 IUDs is recommended for such people.

Get More Information!

[Anti-Aging Foods](#) is a site that promotes nutrition for prevention and management of chronic diseases and conditions associated with aging. Rosemary Fisher, a spry 80 year old explains how she reversed her osteoporosis, heart disease, and Alzheimer's dementia. Recipes, articles, and other resources.

[Facts about Osteoporosis and Nutrition](#) is presented by the American Dietetics Association.

[Medscape.com](#) offers free registration to join their database to search a multitude of health-related topics, articles, news, and resources. One resource is an online textbook, *Osteoporosis: Prevention, Diagnosis, and Management*. This site also offers free email, such as yourname@medscape.com and a personalized entry page.

