

Calcium Guidelines

Inadequate calcium in your diet can lead to osteoporosis. Calcium loss from your bones can also occur due to physical inactivity, smoking, estrogen deficiency, alcohol abuse, and gastrointestinal disorders such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis and primary biliary cirrhosis.

Peak bone mass occurs at age 20 to 30.

Vitamin D is necessary for intestinal absorption of calcium; recommended dose is 400 to 800 IU/day.

Recommended Daily Doses of Calcium for Adults

- Men and women ages 25 to 50 – 1,000 mg per day
- Men and women older than 65 – 1,500 mg per day
- People with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis – 1,200 mg per day
- Pregnant women – 1,200 mg per day

Dairy products, some vegetables, and fish are good sources of calcium.

- Bok choy, 250 mg per cup
- Broccoli, 135 mg per cup
- Soybeans, 175 mg per cup
- Carrots, 100 mg per cup
- Calcium-fortified orange juice, 300 mg per cup
- Ice cream, 200 mg per cup
- Cheese, 1 ounce, 300 mg
- Milk, one cup, 300 mg

Calcium Supplements

Calcium Carbonate

- Should be taken with meals
- Examples are Tums-EX® (300 mg each) and Viactiv® calcium chews (500 mg each)
- Can cause constipation

Calcium Citrate

- Can be taken with or without food
- Do not require high stomach acid to be absorbed—good choice for people on acid reducers, such as Pepcid®, Prilosec® OTC, or Proton Pump Inhibitors _____.
- Example is Citracal®
- Less bloating and constipation