

Bone Up on Your Diet

Handout 2

Calcium

To keep your bones strong, eat foods rich in calcium. Some people have trouble digesting the lactose found in milk and other dairy foods, including cheese and yogurt. Most supermarkets sell lactose-reduced dairy foods. Many nondairy foods are also calcium-rich.

Your Body Needs Calcium

| If this is your age, | then you need this much calcium each day (mg). |
|----------------------|--|
| 0 to 6 months | 210 |
| 6 to 12 months | 270 |
| 1 to 3 years | 500 |
| 4 to 8 years | 800 |
| 9 to 18 years | 1,300 |
| 18 to 50 years | 1,000 |
| Over 50 years | 1,200 |

(A cup of milk or fortified orange juice has about 300 mg of calcium)

Calcium Calculator

Help your bones. Choose foods that are high in calcium. Here are some examples.

| Food | Calcium (mg) | Points |
|--|--------------|--------|
| Fortified oatmeal, 1 packet | 350 | 3 |
| Sardines, canned in oil, with edible bones, 3 ounces | 324 | 3 |
| Cheddar cheese, 1 1/2 ounces, shredded | 306 | 3 |
| Milk, nonfat, 1 cup | 302 | 3 |
| Milk shake, 1 cup | 300 | 3 |
| Yogurt, plain, low-fat, 1 cup | 300 | 3 |
| Soybeans, cooked, 1 cup | 261 | 3 |
| Tofu, firm, with calcium, 1/2 cup | 204 | 2 |

| Food | Calcium (mg) | Points |
|--|-------------------|--------|
| Orange juice, fortified with calcium, 6 ounces | 200-260 (varies) | 2-3 |
| Salmon, canned, with edible bones, 3 ounces | 181 | 2 |
| Pudding, instant, (chocolate, banana, etc.) made with 2% milk, 1/2 cup | 153 | 2 |
| Baked beans, 1 cup | 142 | 1 |
| Cottage cheese, 1% milk fat, 1 cup | 138 | 1 |
| Spaghetti, lasagna, 1 cup | 125 | 1 |
| Frozen yogurt, vanilla, soft-serve, 1/2 cup | 103 | 1 |
| Ready-to-eat cereal, fortified with calcium, 1 cup | 100-1000 (varies) | 1-10 |
| Cheese pizza, 1 slice | 100 | 1 |
| Fortified waffles, 2 | 100 | 1 |
| Turnip greens, boiled, 1/2 cup | 99 | 1 |
| Broccoli, raw, 1 cup | 90 | 1 |
| Ice cream, vanilla, 1/2 cup | 85 | 1 |
| Soy or rice milk, fortified with calcium, 1 cup | 80-500 (varies) | 1-5 |
| Your Total Today | | |

Points Needed:

| Age | Points |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| babies/toddlers (ages 0-3) need | 2-5 |
| children (ages 4-8) need | 8 |
| teens need | 13 |
| adults under 50 need | 10 |
| adults over 50 need | 12 |

Fast Fact: *Lack of calcium has been singled out as a major public health concern because it is critically important to bone health. The average American consumes far less than the amount recommended.*

Excerpted from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The 2004 *Surgeon General's Report on Bone Health and Osteoporosis: What It Means to You*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General, 2004.

A Guide to Calculate Calcium Intake

Most Americans above age 9 on average do not consume recommended levels of calcium. The following guide allows an adult to compare a rough estimate of his or her intake of calcium to the recommended amounts:

- Start by writing down the following amount.
 - 290 if you are a female, regardless of age, or male age 60 or older.
 - 370 if you are a male under age 60.

This is the average amount of calcium that most people eat from non-calcium rich food sources.

- Add 300 mg for each 8-ounce serving of milk or the equivalent serving of other calcium-rich foods (e.g., yogurt, cheese).
- For those taking a calcium supplement or a multi-vitamin containing calcium, add the amount of calcium from that source:
 - Check the supplement label for the amount of calcium per supplement dose.
 - Multiply the amount per supplement dose times the number of doses taken per day.
 - Add the amount from supplements to the base amount and the amount from calcium-rich foods.
 - Compare this rough estimate of total calcium intake to the recommended levels shown above. Individuals should try to meet their recommended level of calcium on most days.
- A useful calcium calculator for children can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones/parents/toolbox/calculator.html>.

