How Much Calcium and Vitamin D Do I Need?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Estimated calcium content in milligrams (mg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt and Ice cream</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>1 oz.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish and Shellfish (canned)</td>
<td>3 oz.</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and Vegetables</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortified Fruits (fruit juice)</td>
<td>6 oz.</td>
<td>200-345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calcium Needs (mg)</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Estimated daily dietary intake (mg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>400 IU*</td>
<td>6-8 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-18 years</td>
<td>400 IU*</td>
<td>800-1,200 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19+ years</td>
<td>1,300 mg</td>
<td>1,200-1,400 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to Choose a Calcium Supplement

1. Read the label carefully on the bottle or package. It will tell you how much calcium is in the supplement.
2. Ask your doctor, healthcare provider or pharmacist if there could be any problems from taking a calcium supplement with any of your medicines and other supplements. For example, you shouldn't take an iron supplement at the same time of day as your calcium supplement.
3. Don't take all of your calcium supplements at one time. Your body absorbs calcium best in amounts of 600 mg or less.
4. Don't take supplements that come from unrefined oyster shell, bone meal or dolomite unless the label states “purified” or has the USP (United States Pharmacopeia) symbol.

Why Is Vitamin D Important?

Your body needs vitamin D to absorb calcium. You can get small amounts of vitamin D from a few foods, including liver, egg yolks and fatty fish like mackerel, salmon and tuna. Vitamin D is also added to milk and some other foods. You can read the food label to see if vitamin D has been added to a specific food.

Your skin can make vitamin D from the sun, but getting too much sun can be harmful. It’s important to protect your skin to prevent vitamin D deficiency, but these products also prevent your skin from making vitamin D from the sun.

To get enough vitamin D, many people need to take a supplement. To find out if you’re getting enough of the vitamin, you can ask your doctor or other healthcare provider for a blood test to check your vitamin D level.
How Can I Find Out If I Have Healthy Bones?

You can find out if you have osteoporosis or if you are at risk for the disease by getting a bone mineral density (BMD) test. The National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) recommends a BMD test of the hip and spine by a central DXA machine to diagnose osteoporosis. DXA stands for dual energy x-ray absorptiometry.

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider about whether you should have a BMD test. If you are a woman and have reached menopause or a man age 50 or older, you should learn about your risk factors for osteoporosis. If you have risk factors, you may need a BMD test. If you are a woman age 65 or older or a man age 70 or older and have never had a BMD test, you should have one. Medicare insurance will pay for a test every two years.

How Can I Protect My Spine?

You can prevent broken bones in your spine by:

- Having a slumped, head-forward posture.
- Bending forward from the waist.
- Twisting the spine to a point of strain.
- Twisting the trunk and bending forward when doing activities such as aneuvin, vacuuming or lifting.

To Become an NOF Member:

To learn more about taking care of your bones and preventing or treating osteoporosis, consider becoming a member of NOF. As a member, you will get:

- Boning Up on Osteoporosis, NOF’s 100-page user manual for your bones.
- Preparing For Your Visit With Your Doctor and Healthcare Team.
- The Osteoporosis Report, NOF’s quarterly newsletter.
- A 15 percent discount on publications and gifts purchased from NOF’s store at www.nofstore.org.
- A set of NOF publications and gifts available free of charge with a 10 percent discount.
- To receive free educational information about bone health, contact NOF. If you already have low bone density or osteoporosis, ask about NOF’s free programs of support.

How Can I Prevent Falls?

One way you can prevent broken bones is by preventing falls. To prevent falls:

- Exercise to keep your muscles strong and improve your balance.
- Wear supportive shoes with rubber soles and low heels. Don’t walk in socks or slip on slippers.
- Ask your doctor, healthcare provider or pharmacist if any of your medicines could make you feel dizzy.
- Keep your floors free of clutter. Remove loose wires, cords and throw rugs.
- Keep halls, stairs and entry ways well lit. Use night lights in the bedroom and bathroom.
- Use grab bars and a nonskid rubber mat in the shower or bathtub.
- Have your vision and hearing checked often.

Learn More. Become an NOF Member!

Get the Facts About Osteoporosis and Broken Bones

What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a disease that makes a person’s bones weak and more likely to break. A person with osteoporosis can break a bone from a minor fall or simply from a sneeze or bumping into furniture.

Osteoporosis is common.

Ten million Americans already have the disease. About one in two women and nearly one in four men over the age of 50 will break a bone because of osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is serious.

Breaking a bone is serious. A person with osteoporosis most often breaks a bone in the hip, spine or wrist, but other bones can also break. Broken bones can cause severe pain. In many cases, these broken bones must be fixed with surgery. Broken bones of the spine can cause a person to become shorter. The spine may start to curve forward making it hard to stand up straight. Breaking a hip bone is even more serious. After breaking a hip, many people can’t walk again or take care of themselves.

Osteoporosis can sneak up on you.

People can’t feel their bones getting weaker. A person can have osteoporosis and not know it. Many people learn that they have the disease only after they break a bone.

Osteoporosis What You Need to Know

5 Steps to Bone Health

Together, the following five steps can improve bone health and help prevent osteoporosis:

- Get the calcium and vitamin D you need every day.
- Do regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercises.
- Don’t smoke and don’t drink too much alcohol.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about your chance of getting osteoporosis and ask whether you should have a bone mineral density test.
- Take an osteoporosis medication when it’s right for you.