



# HEALTH AWARENESS

## Know Your Numbers To Help Prevent Calcium Deficiency And Osteoporosis

(NAPSA)—The U.S. Surgeon General's *Report on Bone Health and Osteoporosis* singles out calcium deficiency as a major health concern, noting that while maintaining the appropriate intake level is critically important to bone health for individuals of all ages, the average American consumes far below the recommended amount.

"Calcium deficiency has become a major health problem in the United States, putting people at risk for osteoporosis as well as other possible conditions," says Michael Anthony Thomas, M.D., a women's health expert at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. "Fortunately, osteoporosis is largely preventable, and no one is too old or too young to reduce their risks."

### Know Your Numbers

The first step in reducing calcium deficiency and its associated risks is for consumers to become better educated about how much calcium is needed every day and how to get the recommended amount, according to Dr. Thomas.

One easy way Americans can monitor their risk for calcium deficiency and osteoporosis is to "Know Their Numbers":

- **Height:** One sign of osteoporosis is loss of height, so get measured every year.

- **Bone Density:** This simple, painless test can indicate if there is low bone density. Ask your doctor if a bone density test is right for you.

- **Calcium Requirements vs. Intake:** Know how much calcium you need, and take the necessary steps to determine if you're getting enough through diet and supplements.

### Meeting Daily Calcium Needs

Chief among the Surgeon General's recommendations to decrease the likelihood of developing osteoporosis is getting the recommended amounts of calcium and vitamin D.

Experts say that most adult Americans should be consuming between 1,000 and 1,200 mg of cal-



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cium per day, and certain groups like teens, pregnant women and postmenopausal women require even more. The average adult under 50 also needs about 400 International Units (IU) of vitamin D and those over 50 should get about 600 IU per day.

"With today's hectic lifestyles, people are often unable to obtain enough calcium from food sources alone," says Dr. Thomas.

"Most people assume they get enough calcium every day, but fewer than one in four people actually meet current calcium recommendations," he explains.

Taking supplements, like TUMS® or Os-Cal®, regularly every day can help people achieve recommended amounts of calcium quickly, conveniently and inexpensively. For most supplements, it takes just one or two tablets with breakfast and dinner to meet the recommended amount of calcium.

"By establishing and maintaining good habits throughout their lives, Americans of all ages can have strong bones that can help them live longer, healthier lives," says Dr. Thomas.

Consumers who want to monitor their risks for calcium deficiency and osteoporosis can download customizable "Know Your Numbers" wallet cards at [www.calciuminfo.com](http://www.calciuminfo.com), or call 866-MY-CALCIUM for more information.