



Health Hints



Five “Calcium Stealers” You Should Know About

(NAPSA)—Though public awareness of calcium’s role in preventing osteoporosis has increased in recent years, many adults still consume only half of the recommended daily intake of 1,000 to 1,200 mg of calcium, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

“When you don’t get enough calcium from your diet,” says Lynn Moss, M.S., R.D., “the body will take the calcium it needs from your bones, eventually leading to bone porosity or osteoporosis.” Moss, nutrition advisor for Optimize Hi-Calcium and Hi-Fiber beverages, concludes, “We’re finding that not just one but a number of lifestyle habits may lead to calcium deficiency.”

To arm consumers with information on bone loss prevention, Moss recommends people know the following “secret stealers” of calcium.

1. Lack of vitamin D. A recent study from Harvard Medical School found that 30 to 40 percent of people in the United States might be vitamin D deficient. Vitamin D is necessary for the intestinal absorption of calcium.

2. Too much salt. A high-sodium diet increases the loss of calcium and other minerals through the kidneys into the urine. Every two extra grams of dietary sodium decreases the amount of calcium absorbed by 30 to 40 mg.

3. Some prescription drugs. A number of prescription medications have been shown to interfere with calcium absorption, including diuretics, corticosteroids, anti-convulsants, immuno-suppressive medications, non-steroidal anti-



Calcium stealers are more common than you think.

inflammatory drugs, asthma medications with steroids, and a number of antibiotics. Ask your doctor if your medication interferes with calcium absorption.

4. Smoking/excessive drinking. A number of studies have shown smoking accelerates bone loss and contributes to less efficient calcium absorption. In addition, drinking alcohol on a regular basis can break down bone mass in both men and women. Individuals who consume alcohol regularly (2 to 3 oz/day) are more likely to have poor nutrition habits and are at a greater risk for bone loss and fractures due to falls.

5. Lack of exercise. Individuals who get little or no exercise—especially weight-bearing exercise, such as walking and weightlifting—and have inadequate calcium intake, are at risk for calcium depletion from the bones.

Extremely high protein intake or excessive consumption of caffeine or soda may also hinder cal-

cium absorption.

“A balanced diet rich in calcium, vitamin D and other nutrients, proper exercise and a healthy lifestyle are all ways to keep bones healthy,” says Moss.

Moss offers these easy tips for meeting the daily recommended value of calcium:

- **Eat in small doses.** Calcium is absorbed best when consumed in small doses throughout the day. Consume calcium in 500 mg doses or less for optimal absorption.

- **Think dairy and green.** Low fat dairy products, such as skim milk, yogurt, cheese and ice cream and dark green, leafy vegetables are the best food sources of calcium.

- **Try something new.** Eat calcium-fortified foods including orange juice, cereals and breads. New Optimize Hi-Calcium beverages are clinically proven in recent studies to provide 50 percent greater absorption of calcium due to its patent-pending, synergistic blend of absorption-aiding and bone building nutrients. As a result, one Optimize Hi-Calcium beverage provides as much absorbed calcium to the body as 2½ glasses of milk.

- **Supplement.** There are many calcium supplements on the market. Make sure you choose one from a quality manufacturer. Nature Made Calcium tablets or CalBurst soft chews are two good choices.

For more information, please call the Optimize nutrition hotline at (800) 669-9163 or visit www.optimize-nutrition.com.