

Total Nutrition

Sneak Calcium Into Your Diet Simple Ways to Get What You Need

(NAPSA)—Think of calcium and you think of bones. There is no argument that it's essential for making them strong, but calcium may go beyond bones in terms of benefits. Researchers are now looking at the connection between calcium and healthy blood pressure, decreased risk of kidney stones and possibly weight control.

In light of these potential benefits, it pays to get enough calcium. Food intake surveys, however, show that virtually all American females over the age of 11 fail to get the recommended amount—at least 1,000 milligrams a day. Males are not faring much better—many fall short of meeting their calcium needs. Supplements are an option, but there are plenty of other “tasteful” ways to cash in on calcium in addition to drinking milk. Here's how:

- **Do more with dairy.** Sprinkle cheese on top of casseroles, chili, salads, pasta and potatoes. Substitute yogurt for sour cream in dips (ounce for ounce, yogurt has twice the calcium) and reconstitute cream soups with skim milk instead of water. You can even make your own cream soup using evaporated skim milk instead of cream (triple the calcium for a fraction of the fat).

- **Try a little instant non-fat dry milk powder**—One tablespoon contains 50 milligrams of calcium. Stir a few tablespoons into your casseroles, cream soups or cookie recipes and watch the calcium add up.

- **Check out calcium-fortified drinks**—Fruit juices and soy milks are often fortified with calcium—many have as much calcium as a single serving of milk, about 300 milligrams per cup.

Foods That Deliver On Calcium		
Food	Amount	Calcium (milligrams)
Dairy foods	1 ounce of cheese 1 cup of milk, yogurt, ready-to-eat pudding	200-400
Fortified ready-to-eat cereal	1 cup	100 - 1,000 Check package labels
Calcium fortified drinks	1 cup	200-300
Almonds	1/2 cup	180
Dark green vegetables	1/2 cup	50-80 [Ⓣ]

- **Find calcium in other unexpected places**—Bread, pasta, rice, waffles, snack bars and cereal are just a few of the foods that often have calcium added to their ingredient lists. Including them on your shopping list makes it much easier to get the calcium you need. Almonds, soy nuts and molasses are other less-than-traditional sources for calcium. Sprinkle nuts on salads or add them to a trail mix, drizzle molasses over hot cereal or add it to cookie and bread recipes.

While there is applause for the growing number of calcium-fortified foods, nutritionists urge consumers to take a close look at a product's label before assuming it's healthful. Some fortified foods contain calcium but not much else in terms of nutrition. Others, such as ready-to-eat cereals, are brimming with vitamins and minerals including calcium. Choose foods that offer more than calories and calcium.

A Great Start Toward Total Nutrition—Too much of a good thing may be possible. Experts think the upper limit for calcium is 2,500 milligrams in a day. Few people, however, consume this much calcium on a daily basis. Look at the sources of calcium in your diet, and aim for at least 1,000 milligrams of this mineral each day.

Brought to you by Total cereals, breakfast cereals with 100% of the daily value of at least 11 vitamins and minerals.