

# calcium

**Calcium** is a mineral that is used for building bones and teeth and also in maintaining bone strength. Calcium is also needed in our blood for our nerves and muscles to function properly.

There is a widespread misconception that calcium is only important for growing children and menopausal women but, we often forget that our bones are not static and that people of all ages need calcium.

Our body maintains blood calcium levels by drawing calcium from the bones. If calcium is constantly being withdrawn from our bones without being replaced, bones can become porous and lose strength. For this reason it is very important to include calcium-containing foods in your eating plan. The recommended adult's daily allowance of calcium is 1000mg per day. For women over 50 this increases to a recommended intake of 1500mg.



## Which foods are good sources of calcium?

Dairy products such as cheese and milk are the first products that come to mind when we think of calcium, but in fact, all green leafy vegetables contain calcium especially bok choy, spinach and Broccoli. Nuts and sesame seeds are also great sources of calcium, as well as small fish (including bones), crustaceans and some fruits.

Our environment and daily activities also influence calcium absorption. For optimum calcium absorption, try the following:

- Do some weight bearing exercise such as walking.
- Keep tea, coffee and carbonated drinks to a minimum. Avoid these drinks straight after a meal as they can interfere with calcium absorption.
- If you feel you need a calcium supplement, choose a suitable one from your local health food store.

## Are you eating enough Calcium?

Adults RDI of Calcium – 1000mg per day aged 19 – 50 years old

Women on estrogen replacement – 1,200mg per day

Women over 50 not on estrogen replacement – 1,500mg per day

### Tip

Enjoy your sesame seeds sprinkled into a salad or grind them and coat a piece of salmon with your sesame seed mix after cooking.

### References

Harvey & Marilyn Diamond, *Fit for life*; 1989

Julia Ross, *The Diet Cure*; 2000

<http://www.woolworths.com.au>

### A TYPICAL SURESLIM DAY

|       |                    |              |
|-------|--------------------|--------------|
| 190g  | Yogurt             | <b>600</b>   |
| 1     | Orange             | <b>50</b>    |
| 65g   | Cheese             | <b>300</b>   |
| 125g  | Broccoli           | <b>50</b>    |
| 100g  | Salmon with bones  | <b>200</b>   |
| 1 cup | Spinach & bok choy | <b>265</b>   |
| 1tbs  | Sesame seeds       | <b>131</b>   |
| 1tbs  | Sunflower seeds    | <b>32</b>    |
|       | <b>TOTAL</b>       | <b>1,628</b> |

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