



Calcium

As you have probably heard **calcium** is needed for strong bones and teeth. However, **calcium** has many other important functions in your body. For example, **calcium** plays a role in expanding and constricting blood vessels, nervous system signaling, regulating hormones, and muscle contraction. If your intake is low, **calcium** will be drawn from your bones to help support systematic functions in your body. When **calcium** is taken from your bones, your risk for osteoporosis increases. (Osteoporosis is a skeletal disorder in which bone strength is compromised, resulting in an increased risk of fracture.)

Currently, average dietary intakes of **calcium** in the US are well below the adequate intake recommendations for every age and gender. **Men and women over the age of 19 need 1000 to 1200 mg of calcium a day!** This equals about 3-4 servings of dairy a day. To increase your daily calcium intake, use the table below to choose foods with higher levels of this vital mineral.

Calcium in foods

Food	Serving	Amount
Yogurt*	1 cup	345 mg
Milk*	1 cup	300 mg
Cheese*	1 oz	200 mg
Salmon (canned w edible bones)	3 oz	205 mg
Spinach	½ cup	138 mg
Pudding	½ cup	150 mg
Frozen Yogurt	½ cup	105 mg
Almonds	¼ cup	92 mg
Ice Cream*	½ cup	85 mg
Cottage Cheese*	½ cup	75 mg
Okra	½ cup	50 mg
Orange	1 medium	52 mg
Broccoli — raw	½ cup	38 mg

* Lower fat choices of these foods are recommended



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