

WHY IS CALCIUM IMPORTANT?

A UK study of over 34 thousand adults, over five years, found that the vegans studied had a higher risk of bone fracture than the meat eaters, fish eaters and vegetarians studied. This appeared to be a result of their lower calcium intake.

HOW MUCH CALCIUM DO I NEED?

Our bodies use calcium continuously, so we must replace it regularly via diet. Adults with Osteoporosis need up to 1000mg a day.

(Source: National Osteoporosis Society)

DO I NEED CALCIUM SUPPLEMENTS?

Food is the best source of all nutrients. However for people following a very restricted diet, supplements of calcium and/or vitamin D may be recommended by your doctor/local dietitian.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF CALCIUM IN THE VEGAN DIET? – numbers overleaf!

- ✓ **Some breakfast cereals** that are calcium enriched
- ✓ **Tofu** - the calcium varies by brand so check packaging
- ✓ **Rice, oat or soya milk** that is enriched with calcium
- ✓ **Soya yoghurt** that is enriched with calcium
- ✓ **Bread** and foods made with white, brown and wholemeal flour
- ✓ **Some nuts**, including almonds, hazelnuts and brazil nuts
- ✓ **Seeds** such as sesame seeds (and sesame seed paste)
- ✓ **Some beans and lentils** such as chickpeas
- ✓ **Green leafy vegetables** including spinach and spring greens



WHAT NOW? WAYS TO INCREASE CALCIUM IN MY DIET...

- ✓ **Milk alternatives** made from soya, oat & rice can be enriched with calcium, check your brand.
- ✓ **Aim to have one pint** of enriched soya/ rice/ oat milk per day. Either on its own, in milkshakes, smoothies or hot drinks . Use it in cooking for puddings and sauces. Alternatively, aim for 3 portions of a calcium enriched 'dairy alternative' every day. For example: fortified oat milk with breakfast cereal; soya cheese in a sandwich at lunch & a soya yoghurt after your evening meal.
- ✓ **Aim to use tofu** in your main meals at least twice a week.
- ✓ **Sprinkle sesame seeds** as a crispy topping for potato pies, fruit salads, breakfast cereals & salads
- ✓ **Add dried fruit or nuts** to fruit salads, breakfast cereals or baking

WHAT'S YOUR INTAKE? – use this to find out..

To find out more about calcium sources and high-calcium recipes visit the vegan society at www.vegansociety.com

FOOD	PORTION SIZE	Calcium (mg)	FOOD	PORTION SIZE	Calcium (mg)
DAIRY ALTERNATIVES			VEGETABLES		
Tofu*	Medium portion (100g)	100-500	Okra- stir fried	Medium portion (60g)	132
Soya milk- fortified	1/3 pint (200ml)	178	Curly kale	Medium portion (60g)	90
Soya milk organic	1/3 pint (200ml)	26	Spinach- boiled	1 tablespoon (40g)	64
Oat milk- fortified	1/3 pint (200ml)	240	Broccoli	Medium portion (85g)	34
Rice milk- fortified	1/3 pint (200ml)	130	Cabbage	Medium portion (95g)	31
Soya yoghurt- fortified	Small pot (125g)	150	Watercress	Quarter bunch (20g)	34
Soya yoghurt organic	Small pot (125g)	18	FRUIT		
Soya cheese- fortified*	Matchbox size (40g)	400	Orange juice- enriched	1 glass (160ml)	195
CEREAL			Orange	1 small (120g)	16
Ready Brek	Medium portion (30g)	360	Orange juice	1 glass (160ml)	56
Rice Krispies	Medium portion (30g)	135	Dried figs	1 (20g)	50
Swiss muesli	2 tablespoons (30g)	33	Dried apricots	4 (32g)	23
White bread	1 slice (28g)	50	Cumtuts	1 tablespoon (25g)	23
Wholemeal bread	1 slice (28g)	30	EVAN WATER!		
Chapatti	1 small (30g)	20	Hard Water**	1 litre	111
NUTS/ SEEDS			Danone Activ	1 litre	300
Tahini	1 teaspoon (19g)	130	Calium Clear	100ml	132
Sesame seeds	1 tablespoon (12g)	80	(sparkling)		
Chick peas	1 tablespoon (35g)	56	Perfectly Clear	1 litre	103
Baked beans	2 tablespoons (80g)	42	Buxton	1 litre	55
Almonds	6 whole (13g)	31			
Treacle, black	1 teaspoon (18g)	100			

Some retailers chose to enrich their foods with extra calcium. Organic products do not do this.

SOURCE: Food Standards Agency (2002), McCance and Widdowson's The Composition of Foods.*Levels vary according to processing method, so check the label of the brand you use. **Thames water, level quoted for Oxford 2002

OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING HEALTHY BONES...



KEEP TO A HEALTHY WEIGHT Know your Body Mass Index (BMI) which is a measure of how healthy your weight is. A BMI between 20kgm² to 25kgm² is good for bones

If you are **underweight**, you may be advised by your doctor that you need to gain weight for your bone health



VITAMIN D helps your body absorb calcium and use it properly. The main source is from sunlight on our skin. There is a small amount in oily fish, margarine, eggs and fortified breakfast cereal



REGULAR EXERCISE such as walking, dancing, aerobics and football helps keep muscles strong. Muscle protects our bones and helps reduce the risk of falling



ALCOHOL in excess causes the body to lose calcium. Recommended limits are no more than 3 units a day for men and 2 units a day for women



SALT - high intakes can increase calcium loss from your body. Try to avoid eating too many processed foods and limit the amount of salt added to food



CAFFEINE - high intakes (more than 4 cups of strong coffee per day) may reduce bone mineral density. Caffeine is in coffee, tea & cola drinks. Be careful and moderate



SMOKING causes bones to lose calcium. It's another reason to stop!