

# Allergy and Immunology

## Calcium

Calcium is a mineral that is important for strong bones and teeth. Low calcium intakes have been linked to osteoporosis in later life.

The major sources of calcium in most Western diets are dairy products such as milk, yoghurt and cheese. Other good sources of calcium are bony fish (canned salmon and sardines), almonds, fortified soy products and fortified plant rice beverages.

Small quantities of calcium can be found in other nuts, some dried fruits, sesame seeds and green leafy vegetables (spinach, parsley).

Milk allergy is the most common food allergy affecting young children. A large number of children with milk allergy also have soy allergy so obtaining enough calcium from other dietary sources can be difficult.

The table below lists the calcium content of a number of foods.

**1 serve of calcium is equal to 250mg. The following amounts of food provide one serve of calcium (on average).**

Food Product	Serve size = 1 serve of calcium (250mg)
Cow's milk	200mls or 1 cup
Yoghurt	200g or 1 regular tub
Cheese	35g or 2 cheese slices
Soy milk, fortified with calcium	200mls or 1 cup
Soy yoghurt	200g or 1 regular tub
Soy cheese	125g - 400g (varies)
Fortified rice beverage	200mls or 1 cup
Almonds	100g
Tahini	75g
Dried figs	125g
Bony fish (must eat bones)	75g
White sesame seeds	400g
Boiled spinach and raw parsley	150g
Milk chocolate	120g
Breast milk	750mls
Infant formula - Step 1 From birth	500mls
Infant formula - Step 2 Follow On	300-350mls
Toddler Formula - Step 3	200mls or 1 cup
Soy formula	400mls
Peptijunior, Alfare, AllerPro and Alfamino formulae	500mls
Neocate LCP/Gold, Novalac Allergy	400mL
Neocate Advance formula	230mls or 1 cup
Elecare formula - < 12 mths of age	300mls
Elecare formula - > 12 mths age	200mls or 1 cup

Calcium needs change with age. Below is a table with the recommended daily intake or RDI of calcium for children and adults and the number of serves of calcium needed to provide the RDI. 1 serve = 250mg Calcium.

Age	Calcium requirement per day (mg) or RDI	Number of serves per day
1-3yr	500	2
4-8	700	3
9-11	1000	4
12-18	1300	5
Breastfeeding women	1000	4

### CALCIUM SUPPLEMENTS

Calcium supplements are available over the counter at chemists and supermarkets. They are used to supplement the diet if the dietary intake of calcium is low. Ask your pharmacist for more information regarding the below products.

Supplement Name	Description	Calcium Amount/tablet	Other
Actical	Chewable Vanilla flavoured tablet	200mg	Vit D 100IU
Swisse kids Calcium Plus D3	Chewable berry flavoured capsule	200mg	Vit D 300IU
Ostelin kids Vitamin D and Calcium	Chewable berry flavoured tablet	350mg	Vit D 300IU
Nature's Way Kids Calcium + D3	Chewable Strawberry flavoured burstlet	200mg	Vit D 300IU
Nature's Way Calcium and Vitamin D (Vita Gummies)	Vanilla/raspberry flavoured chewable pastilles	90mg	Vit D 100IU *contains gluten/wheat
Swisse Calcium + Vitamin D	Chalky tablets that can be crushed and added to foods or swallowed whole	333mg	Vit D 333IU
Caltrate varieties		500-600mg	Vit D 500-1000IU
Calci-tab 600		600mg	
Cal-sup	Chewable spearmint flavoured tablet	500mg	
Osteo Vit-D and Calcium	Chewable vanilla flavoured tablet	600mg	Vit D 1000IU
Ostelin Vitamin D & Calcium	Chewable citrus flavoured tablet	600mg	Vit D 500IU
Calsource 1000	Dissolvable tablet	1000mg	
Calvid	Orange flavoured dissolvable granules	1000mg	Vit D 880IU

TIP: Calcium supplements are more effective when taken:

- In split doses (calcium is best absorbed in doses less than 500mg)
- Separately from iron or iron rich meals (iron rich foods include red meat, chicken, fish and shellfish)