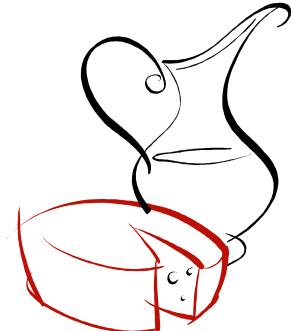




Calcium-Rich Diet



A calcium-rich diet keeps you healthy and helps prevent osteoporosis later on in life. Milk and milk products are the best dietary source of calcium. Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium and it is added to milk in Canada. Other foods which contain less calcium include canned fish with bones, nuts, beans and some green vegetables.

Why do you need this diet?

The body does not make calcium so you need to get it from your diet. A small amount of calcium is found in our blood and helps with clotting, keeping a normal heartbeat and controlling blood pressure. Calcium is also needed for the proper functioning of muscles and nerves.

Your bones act as a calcium 'bank'. When your diet is rich in calcium, you make 'deposits' in your bones. If you do not eat enough calcium-rich foods, your body will begin to 'withdraw' calcium stored in your bones.

Although eating a diet rich in calcium is important at every age, it is especially important for preteens and teens as well as older adults. The teenage years are when our bones grow the most and the fastest. By age 35, this process stops and our bones start to break down slowly. This can eventually lead to fragile bones which are much easier to break, a condition known as osteoporosis.

How much calcium do you need each day?

Age	Milligrams(mg) per day
1 to 3	500
4 to 8	800
9 to 18	1300
19 to 50	1000
51 and over	1200

Which foods are rich in calcium?

Excellent sources of calcium—more than 275mg per serving



Food	Serving
Buttermilk	250mL (1 cup)
Firm cheese (Brick, Cheddar, Colby, Edam, Gouda)	50 g (2 ounces)
Milk (skim, 1%, 2%, 3.25%)	250mL (1 cup)
Milk, chocolate	250mL (1 cup)
Milk powder, dry	90mL (6 tablespoons)
Mozzarella cheese, partly skimmed	50 g (2 ounces)
Processed cheese slices, thick	2
Swiss cheese	50 g (2 ounces)
Yogurt, plain	175g (3/4 cup)

Good sources of calcium—more than 165mg per serving



Food	Serving
Camembert cheese	50 g (2 ounces)
Feta cheese	50 g (2 ounces)
Mozzarella cheese	50 g (2 ounces)
Parmesan cheese, grated	45 mL (3 tablespoons)
Processed cheese slices, thin	2
Processed cheese spread	45 mL (3 tablespoons)
Yogurt, fruit flavoured	175g (3/4 cup)
Almonds	125mL (1/2 cup)
Baked beans	250mL (1 cup)
Salmon, canned, with bones	½ - 213g can
Sardines, canned, with bones	11 small
White beans, cooked	250mL (1 cup)

Sources of calcium—more than 55mg per serving



Food	Serving
Brie cheese	50 g (2 ounces)
Cottage cheese (1%, 2%, creamed)	125mL (1/2 cup)
Ice cream	175mL (3/4 cup)
Ice milk	125mL (1/2 cup)
Ricotta cheese	60mL (1/4 cup)
Yogurt, frozen	125mL (1/2 cup)
Bok choy, cooked	125mL (1/2 cup)
Brazil nuts	125mL (1/2 cup)
Chickpeas, cooked	250mL (1 cup)
Kale, cooked	125mL (1/2 cup)
Soybeans, cooked	125mL (1/2 cup)
Tofu, processed with calcium sulphate	100g (1/3 cup)

How can you add more calcium to your diet?

- ✓ Drink milk with all meals.
- ✓ Add grated, sliced or cubed cheese to casseroles, sandwiches and salads.
- ✓ Top meats, vegetables and eggs with melted cheese.
- ✓ Use yogurt as a dip or dressing.
- ✓ Make canned cream soups with milk instead of water.
- ✓ Choose desserts such as yogurt, pudding and custard.
- ✓ Try cheese and crackers or celery and cheese spread for a snack.
- ✓ Have a café latte (coffee with lots of milk).
- ✓ Use canned salmon in casseroles, sandwiches and salads.
- ✓ Include beans or nuts in soups, salads and casseroles.
- ✓ Cook a stir-fry with broccoli, kale or bok choy.
- ✓ Select food and beverages fortified with calcium such as cereals and orange juice.

If you are lactose intolerance or have a milk allergy, talk to a Dietitian to make sure you are getting enough calcium.

Dietitian: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

Adapted from: Dairy Farmers of Canada, 4 Steps to Stronger Bones, 2002; Dietitians of Canada, Calcium-Rich Diet, 2000; Dairy Bureau of Canada, Calcium for Life, 1995; Dairy Bureau of Canada, Calcium You Never Outgrow the Need, 1990