



Concentrating on Calcium

October 2024

Nutrition Corner for Senior Centers
Non-Metro New Mexico Area Agency on Aging

Calcium is a mineral that is vital in keeping bones healthy. Over 99% of Calcium in our body is stored in the bones and teeth. However, it also plays a role in muscle function, nerve transmission, and hormone secretion. Older adults usually don't consume adequate amounts of Calcium and absorption also decreases with age. It is important to encourage older adults to increase their Calcium intake, and we can help by providing Calcium-rich foods on our menus.

Why is it important?

Our bodies rely on the Calcium we get from our diet. If we do not eat enough Calcium-rich foods, our bodies may start pulling Calcium from our bones. This can make our bones weak and at risk for Osteoporosis. Brittle bones due to Osteoporosis cause breaks to happen more easily and frequently. As we age, our bones naturally lose some of their ability to regrow themselves and then become fragile. Providing foods on our menus that are high in Calcium will help promote good bone health.



CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D

Team Work!

Our bodies do not produce Calcium on its own and depend on the foods we eat to provide the needed mineral. However, our bodies can produce Vitamin D with the help of sunlight. Vitamin D helps our bodies to absorb Calcium and helps promote healthy bones, muscles and immune system. Without adequate Vitamin D, our bodies may only absorb 10% of the Calcium that is provided in our diets. People who do not spend a lot of time outdoors may need to take a Vitamin D supplement to boost Calcium absorption. Many foods and drinks have been fortified with added Vitamin D. Please talk with your Dr. about your Calcium and Vitamin D needs.

nih.gov

October

Mental Health Awareness Month

Loneliness and social isolation are key risk factors for older adults to experience mental health conditions. Serving nutritious congregate meals at your center gives participants the opportunity to socialize and connect with others.

"It's more than a meal!"

Senior Center Spotlight



(Your Senior Center's Name Here)

Please help us share the wonderful things that are happening in your community. This is a great opportunity to highlight any special project or events that are occurring at your center.

Please send a paragraph describing the project or event and a picture to:

karenz@ncnmedd.com



Non-Metro New Mexico Area Agency on Aging

Recommended Daily Allowances of Calcium for Older Adults

1,000 - 1,200 mg

Calcium from Dairy



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In the U.S., approximately 72% of Calcium intake comes from dairy products or food with dairy ingredients. These include milk, yogurt, and cheese. Eight ounces of plain, low-fat yogurt can contain 488mg of Calcium and a cup of milk (1% - 2%) can contain 305mg. Cheese may contain 85 to 485mg per 1.5 ounces depending on the kind of cheese. Calcium from dairy products is absorbed in the body more easily than non-dairy products. However, non-dairy products are a good alternative for people who may have problems with dairy digestion.

Milk alternative calcium content



Almond milk
1 cup = 442 mg



Soy milk
1 cup = 302 mg



Rice milk
1 cup = 283 mg



Oat milk
1 cup = 350 mg

Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans

INSIDER



For more information about Calcium and other nutrients, visit our website at:

www.nonmetroaaa.com/provider-portal

Non-Dairy Sources of Calcium

Calcium can come from other sources other than dairy. There are many vegetables and fortified foods that contain Calcium. Leafy greens are a good source and include: Kale, Collard Greens, Arugula, and Bok Choy. These greens can be added to soups and/or salads. Canned fish with bones such as Sardines, Anchovies, and Salmon are also a good source of Calcium. Fortified cereals and juices are also good alternatives to dairy products for Calcium intake. Some seeds and beans contain Calcium. For instance, 1/4 cup of Almonds contains 92mg. A half cup of white beans contains 81mg of Calcium and is an excellent source of Potassium and fiber. There are many creative ways to get Calcium into meals without including dairy.



Resource: Nutrition and Aging Resource Center at <https://acl.gov/senior-nutrition>

Examples of Non-Dairy Sources of Calcium

Tofu 1/2 cup	434 mg of Calcium
Collard Greens, 1 cup cooked	268 mg of Calcium
Bok Choy, 1 cup cooked	185 mg of Calcium
Multi-grain Cheerios, 1 cup	100 mg of Calcium
Broccoli, 1 cup, cooked	80 mg of Calcium
Dried Figs, 1/4 cup	61 mg of Calcium

Here are TWO Smoothie recipes to help boost Calcium intake:



Almond Butter & Banana Protein Smoothie

Serving size: 1 serving
Prep time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

1 small frozen banana
1C unsweetened Almond Milk
2 TBSP Almond butter
2 TBSP unflavored Protein Powder
1 TBSP Sweetener of your choice (optional)
1/2c tsp ground Cinnamon
4-6 ice cubes

DIRECTIONS: Just one step!

Combine all ingredients in a blender until smooth.

Provides:

411mg of Calcium
19 g of Protein

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Pumpkin Pie Smoothie

Serving size: 1 serving

343mg Calcium

Prep time: 5 minutes

10g Protein



INGREDIENTS:

1 medium frozen banana
1/2c unsweetened almond milk or other nut milk
1/3c plain whole-milk Greek yogurt
1/3c canned pumpkin
1/8 tsp pumpkin pie spice
1 -2 tsp pure maple syrup

DIRECTIONS:

Place all ingredients in the blender and blend until smooth.

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