



Calcium Rich Food List

Calcium from whole foods is the best choice for bone health because it comes packaged with other supportive nutrients like magnesium, Vitamin K, protein and phytonutrients. Your body absorbs and uses calcium more efficiently from food compared to supplements.

However, eating enough good calcium food is not enough. There's supporting foods that enhance and other factors that inhibit calcium absorption (see next page).

If you have been diagnosed with osteopenia or osteoporosis, try to get as close to the recommended daily allowance of calcium as you can by including calcium rich foods in your diet every day and supplementing as a top up most days to ensure you are getting enough.

Recommended daily allowance of calcium rich foods for good bone health:

- Women aged 19-50 years = 1,000mg of calcium a day
- Women aged 51 years and older = 1,300mg of calcium a day

Calcium Rich Foods

Food	Serve	Calcium (mg)
Milk (cow's)	250ml	300
Soy milk (fortified)	250ml	350
Yoghurt (plain)	200g	340
Cheddar cheese	40g	310
Parmesan cheese	30g	330
Sardines (canned, with bones)	90g	500
Salmon (canned, with bones)	90g	290
Tofu (firm, calcium-set)	100g	350
White beans (cooked)	1 cup (170g)	160
Chickpeas (cooked)	1 cup (170g)	80
Tahini (unhulled)	1 tblsp (20g)	140
Almonds	30g	75
Chia seeds	2 tblsp (25g)	180
Sesame seeds	2 tblsp (20g)	175
Bok Choy (lightly cooked)	1 cup (150g)	160
Kale (lightly cooked)	1 cup (150g)	170
Broccoli (lightly cooked)	1 cup (150g)	70
Figs (dried)	4 figs (60g)	120
Orange	1 medium (130g)	60

Calcium in nuts and seeds

Nuts	Calcium (mg per 30g)
Almonds	75
Brazil	45
Hazelnuts	55
Walnuts	30
Pistachios	35
Cashews	30
Pine nuts	5
Macadamias	25
Pecans	20

Seeds	Calcium (mg per 2 tbsp)
Chia seeds	180
Sesame seeds	175
Poppy seeds	250 (per tbsp)
Pumpkin seeds	45
Sunflower seeds	20
Flaxseeds	50
Hemp seeds	20

Bone-Supporting Extras

- **Prunes** – about 40mg calcium per 5-6 prunes. Shown to help slow bone loss after menopause due to polyphenols, boron and gut microbiome effects.
- **Vitamin K1 and K2** – supports bone mineralisation. Found in leafy greens and fermented foods.
- **Magnesium** – involved in bone structure and Vitamin D activation. Found in nuts, seeds, legumes, whole grains and leafy greens.
- **Boron** – helps calcium and Vitamin D metabolism. Found in prunes, raisins, almonds, hazelnuts and avocados.
- **Protein** – essential for bone matrix. Best from balanced sources like lean meats, fish, eggs, legumes, tofu and dairy.
- **Vitamin D** – critical for calcium absorption. Best from safe sun exposure and supplementation if needed.
- **Omega-3 fatty acids** – may help reduce bone loss through anti-inflammatory effects. Found in fatty fish, walnuts, flaxseeds and chia seeds.

Foods & Lifestyle Factors that Inhibit Calcium Absorption

- **Excess salt** (sodium) – increases calcium loss through urine.
- **Excess caffeine** – more than 3 cups of coffee per day may slightly reduce calcium absorption.
- **Alcohol** – heavy intake weakens bone by interfering with calcium balance and hormone levels.
- **Soft drinks** (fizzy) – high phosphoric acid may disrupt calcium balance.
- **Low stomach acid** (including long term reflux medications) – can impair calcium absorption.
- **Smoking** – reduces bone mass and calcium uptake.
- **Sedentary lifestyle** – lack of weight bearing exercise reduces calcium being laid down into bones.

Take Home Message

- Aim to get **most of your calcium from whole foods**.
- Use a **supplement as an insurance policy**, not the main source.
- For most women, a **small supplement dose of 200-400mg daily is enough** to cover any shortfall.
- **Pair calcium** with Vitamin D, protein and exercise for best results for good bone health.