

## Increasing Your Calcium Intake

### Importance of Calcium

This guide is designed to provide you with foods that are high in calcium. Eating calcium rich foods will help you develop and maintain strong bones and teeth. A good calcium intake throughout your life can also help to reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis. The following tips will help in planning meals to meet calcium needs of children and adults.



### Steps You Can Take\*

- Choose milk as a beverage with all meals.
- Use yogurt as a dip, garnish, spread or dressing.
- Read the *Nutrition Facts* box on packaged foods and choose those foods that are high in calcium.
- Include calcium-fortified beverages, such as orange juice and soy beverages\*\*.
- Make soups with milk instead of water.
- Try chili with kidney beans, lasagna or burgers made with soy.
- Make your coffee choice a café latté (coffee with extra milk). Limit caffeine intake to about 400 mg/d – the amount present in about 4 cups of coffee.
- Choose custards, puddings or yogurt for dessert.
- Add chick peas, kidney beans, almonds or sesame seeds to salads, soups and casseroles.
- Melt cheese onto meats, vegetables, eggs and tortilla chips.
- Add canned salmon, including the bones, to sandwiches, salads and casseroles.

\* For individuals who need to lower their fat intake, a Registered Dietitian can help you make the best choices.

\*\* Some products are now fortified with calcium carbonate rather than tricalcium phosphate which may improve the availability of calcium to levels similar to those seen in cow's milk. The calcium may separate out of solution so be sure to shake all plant-based calcium-fortified beverages prior to consumption.

This information is not meant to replace advice from your medical doctor or individual counseling with a registered dietitian. It is intended for educational and informational purposes only.

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## Reading Food Labels for Calcium

You will find the *Nutrition Facts* box on most packaged food products. Look for the Percent Daily Value (%DV) that tells you whether a food has a little or a lot of a given nutrient. To learn more about how to use %DV and other nutrition information on packaged food labels see [http://www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca/pdf/ENG\\_RGB\\_FactSheet.pdf](http://www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca/pdf/ENG_RGB_FactSheet.pdf).

Packaged foods may also have labeling claims which can help you make better choices if you know what the claim means. For answers to frequently asked questions about labelling claims refer to [http://www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca/pdf/ENG\\_RGB\\_FAQ.pdf](http://www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca/pdf/ENG_RGB_FAQ.pdf).

**Like calcium, vitamin D is also very important in maintaining strong bones. Talk to your Dietitian to make sure that you are getting enough vitamin D.**

*These resources are provided as sources of additional information believed to be reliable and accurate at the time of publication and should not be considered an endorsement of any information, service, product or company.*

### Notes



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