

Information for Health Professionals

Calcium and Osteoporosis

This should be used in conjunction with 'Information for Patients'

Requirements for calcium vary across the population depending on age, sex and medical status. The information below will help you to assess your client's diet and provide information to help them meet their requirements for calcium

Age	Calcium RNI (mg/day)*
0-3 months	525
4-6 months	525
7-9 months	525
10-12 months	525
1-3 years	350
4-6 years	450
7-10 years	550
Males	
11-14 years	1000
15-18 years	1000
19-50 years	700
50 + years	700
Females	
11-14 years	800
15-18 years	800
19-50 years	700
50 + years	700
Lactation	
0-4 months	+ 550
4+ months	+ 550

* RNI is the reference nutrient intake. This is the amount of a nutrient that will meet the requirements of virtually every healthy person within a population group. If an individual is consuming the RNI of a nutrient then they are unlikely to be deficient in that nutrient.

Good Sources of Calcium

Food	Serving Size	Calcium per serving (mg)
Milk/ Calcium fortified milk (incl. soya)	1/3 pint (200mls)	230
Yoghurt/ Lassi	1 pot/glass (150mls)	225
Hard cheese/paneer	Matchbox size/ 3 tablespoons grated (30g)	220
Canned fish with bones	2 sardines/ 3 pilchards	230
Tofu	60g	306

Moderate Sources of Calcium

Food	Serving Size	Calcium per serving (mg)
Cottage Cheese	1 small pot (150g)	82
Soya cheese	1 matchbox (30g)	180
Baked Beans	1 small tin (150g)	80
Sesame seeds/ tahini	1 heaped tbs. (12g)	80
Dried Figs	2-3	100-150
White Bread	2 large slices	80
Greens/broccoli/ spinach	1/3-1/2 plate (100g)	75

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is produced by the action of sunlight on the skin and aids calcium absorption. Dietary sources of vitamin D include fortified margarine, cereals and oily fish such as sardines and pilchards.

Some people may need a vitamin D supplement; these include older adults who are housebound and people who cover up most of their skin when going outside.