

Calcium Counts!

Calcium is a mineral found in some foods and drinks. It works with other vitamins and minerals to build strong bones and teeth for life!

The best sources of calcium in the diet are milk and milk products. The United States Department of Agriculture says that most young people should drink nonfat or low fat milk products in these amounts:

Children ages 1-3: 2 cups a day

Children ages 4-8: 3 cups a day

Preteens and teens: 4 cups a day

What if your child can't or won't drink that much milk?

Other foods containing smaller amounts of calcium include low fat macaroni and cheese, turnip or beet greens, kale, canned salmon, broccoli, cottage cheese, navy or pinto beans, almonds, and oranges.

If milk products cause gas or diarrhea in an older child, don't let that stop her from getting enough calcium. Serve Lactaid™ (specially treated) milk instead of regular milk. Small servings of yogurt and cheese may not cause a problem.

If your child has an allergy to milk, ask your health care provider how to select a calcium supplement. Or, ask for a nutrition "check up" to help you make sure your child is getting enough calcium.



Here are some easy options that have the same amount of calcium (300 mg) as a cup of nonfat milk:

- Yogurt, nonfat or low fat, 1 cup; choose those with less added sugar or corn syrup
- Smoothies made with milk, yogurt, and frozen fruit
- Nonfat or low fat chocolate milk, 1 cup; try mixing chocolate milk 50/50 with low fat or skim white milk
- Cheese, 2 ounces
- Orange juice plus calcium, 1 cup
- Calcium-fortified soy milk, 1 cup (shake well)
- Total cereal, 3/4 cup

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