

Calcium Supplementation

Why is Calcium Important?

Calcium is essential for **bone health, muscle function, nerve signaling, and blood clotting**. It helps prevent **osteoporosis, fractures, and muscle cramps** and is crucial for **maintaining strong bones throughout life**.

Recommended Daily Calcium Intake

Age Group	Recommended Daily Intake (mg)
Children (4-8 years)	1,000 mg
Children & Teens (9-18 years)	1,300 mg
Adults (19-50 years)	1,000 mg
Women 51+ & Men 71+	1,200 mg

Best Food Sources of Calcium

Dairy Sources

- ✓ Milk (1 cup) - 300 mg
- ✓ Yogurt (1 cup) - 300-400 mg
- ✓ Cheese (1 oz) - 200-300 mg

Non-Dairy Sources

- ✓ Leafy greens (kale, collard greens) - 150-250 mg per cup
- ✓ Almonds (1 oz) - 75 mg
- ✓ Tofu (calcium-set, ½ cup) - 250-500 mg
- ✓ Fortified orange juice (1 cup) - 300 mg

Types of Calcium Supplements

- **Calcium Carbonate** - Requires food for best absorption. Most concentrated form (40% calcium).
- **Calcium Citrate** - Absorbs well with or without food. Recommended for those with low stomach acid or on acid reducers.
- **Calcium Gluconate/Lactate** - Lower calcium content, may require higher doses.

How to Take Calcium Supplements

- ✓ Take **in doses of 500-600 mg at a time** for better absorption.
- ✓ **Take with food** (for calcium carbonate).
- ✓ **Space out calcium and iron supplements** (iron can block calcium absorption).
- ✓ **Pair with Vitamin D (800-1000 IU daily)** for better calcium absorption.

Side Effects & Precautions

⚠ **Too much calcium (>2,000 mg daily) may increase the risk of kidney stones and heart disease.**

⚠ Can cause **constipation, bloating, or gas** - drink plenty of water and eat fiber-rich foods.

⚠ Certain medications (e.g., thyroid meds, antibiotics) may interact - **take calcium 2 hours apart** from these.

When to See a Doctor

If you have **kidney disease, heart disease, or digestive issues** before taking calcium supplements.

If you experience **persistent stomach pain, kidney stones, or abnormal heart rhythms**.

If you have a **history of osteoporosis or fractures**, your doctor may recommend a bone density test.

Bottom Line

Get calcium from food first, supplement only if needed.

Take the right type of calcium based on your needs.

Pair with Vitamin D for best absorption.

Avoid excessive calcium intake to reduce health risks.

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.