



Calcium: The “Super-Nutrient” for Total Body Health

(NAPSA)—You may already know that calcium is critical for strong bones and teeth. Did you also know that calcium is essential for the heart, muscles and nerves to function properly and for blood to clot? In fact, calcium is a “super-nutrient” that helps prevent the risk factors associated with colorectal cancer, high blood pressure and kidney stones.

The Calcium Deficiency Crisis

Most Americans are unaware of calcium’s role in achieving overall health, although it is linked to the reduced risk of many medical conditions. A recent survey conducted by GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, maker of the two most doctor-recommended calcium supplements, Os-Cal® and TUMS®, reveals that one-third of women are unaware that calcium has any health benefits beyond building and maintaining healthy bones.

The survey also showed that most women don’t know how much calcium they actually need. The majority of women surveyed underestimated their daily calcium needs by at least half.

Most adults should be consuming between 1,000 and 1,200 milligrams of calcium per day; certain groups like teens, pregnant women and postmenopausal women require even more. Alarmingly, fewer than one in four actually meets that need.

Getting enough calcium is especially important for expectant mothers, who transfer calcium to their developing babies. However, the majority of pregnant women don’t get enough calcium through diet or from prenatal vitamins, most of which only contain 200 to 300 milligrams.

A constant shortage of calcium eventually takes its toll on the body. When people don’t get adequate amounts of calcium to support the heart, muscles, nerves and other functions, their bodies steal it from their bones. Over time, this weakens them, contributing to the development of osteoporosis.

Although many Americans think of osteoporosis as an older woman’s disease, it actually has its roots in childhood and the teen years, as the bones are being formed. It can strike both men and women of all ages, races and ethnicities.



Calcium is a “super-nutrient” that is key to maintaining total body health.

An Ounce of Prevention

Getting an adequate amount of calcium regularly every day is key to maintaining total body health, but many find it difficult to get enough through diet alone. Simply putting milk in coffee or having a yogurt with lunch doesn’t come close to providing the daily requirements.

Knowing how much calcium to get every day and making it part of the daily routine is the first step in preventing calcium deficiency. Resources like www.calciuminfo.com or 1-866-MY-CALCIUM encourage consumers to learn about the importance of calcium and health.

For people who don’t get enough calcium from the foods they eat, taking calcium supplements like Os-Cal® or TUMS® can help them achieve the recommended amounts of calcium quickly, conveniently and inexpensively. For most supplements, it takes just one or two tablets with both breakfast and dinner to meet the recommended amount of calcium.

People who have already been diagnosed with low bone mass and are taking antiosteoporosis medicines, like bisphosphonates, should consume the recommended amount of calcium and vitamin D daily, as these medicines require adequate calcium to be most effective.

Those concerned about calcium intake should consult with their physicians about incorporating a calcium supplement into the daily routine, and be sure to check supplement labels for the amount of calcium per tablet.