

# Healthy Science™ by Mannatech

## Got Calcium? Jane Ramberg



Recent studies have caused many nutrition scientists to reconsider appropriate daily calcium intake. Concerns about intake of RDA levels of supplemental calcium (1,000 mg/day) were raised a few years ago when a seven-year study of over 36,000 postmenopausal women showed that, while such supplementation resulted in a small but significant improvement in hip bone density, it had no effect on fractures and increased the risk of kidney stones (1). Then came a study last spring that attracted a great deal of media attention. This study showed, again in a large group of postmenopausal women, that 1,000 mg supplemental calcium *increased* the risk of heart attacks (2). So, you may be wondering, how much calcium *should* you consume? Unfortunately, if you are looking

for an expert opinion, you will not find a consensus! Today's RDAs for calcium are (3):

Men		Women	
age 19–70	1,000 mg	age 19–50	1,000 mg
>age 71	1,200 mg	>age 51	1,200 mg

However, Professors Walter Willett, Chair of the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health and Heike A. Bischoff-Ferrari, Director of the Centre on Aging and Mobility at the University of Zurich believe that levels of calcium lower than RDA intakes are appropriate. According to the World Health Organization, for individuals living in countries with a high fracture incidence (such as the United States), a minimum of 400–500 mg of calcium intake is required to prevent osteoporosis.

The recent negative calcium studies suggest to us that, at a minimum, it is sensible to be mindful of one's calcium intake. Even if you decide to go with current RDAs, popping a 1,000 mg/day supplement is probably not appropriate if you are eating calcium-rich foods. Adjusting supplementation based on one's daily diet makes better sense. Here's how much calcium you get from some common foods:

Food	Amount	Calcium Content
Plain low-fat yogurt	8 oz.	415 mg
Cheddar cheese	1.5 oz.	306 mg
Calcium-fortified cereal	1 bowl	100–1,000 mg
Calcium-fortified soy beverage	8 oz.	80–500 mg

Mannatech offers Real Food Technology® solutions products that provide excellent sources of calcium. For example:

Supplement	Daily Amount	Calcium Content
PhytoMatrix® capsules	4 caplets	510 mg
OsoLean® powder	Two servings	450 mg
GlycoSlim® meal replacement drink mix	One serving	200 mg

Remember, if you're taking adequate vitamin D, your body's ability to absorb the calcium you ingest is improved. Studies suggest that calcium supplements be taken with meals to increase solubility; they should also be taken with 8 oz. of water or another liquid. For best absorption, consume a maximum of 500 mg of supplemental calcium at a time.

1. Jackson RD, LaCroix AZ, Gass M et al. Calcium plus vitamin D supplementation and the risk of fractures. *N Engl J Med* 2006;354:669–83.
2. Bolland MJ, Grey A, Avenell A, Gamble GD, Reid IR. Calcium supplements with or without vitamin D and risk of cardiovascular events: reanalysis of the Women's Health Initiative limited access dataset and meta-analysis. *BMJ* 2011;342:d2040.
3. Institute of Medicine. Dietary Reference Intakes for Calcium and Vitamin D. 2010.