



## Calcium



### Overview

This is a mineral our bodies need in abundance. We need it for strong bones and teeth. Our bodies need it for other things too. In fact, there's more calcium in your body than any other mineral.

### How we get it

Our bodies can't make the calcium we need. What are some good sources? Dairy products like milk, cheese and yogurt are all great sources. So are leafy green vegetables like kale and cabbage. You get calcium from pinto beans and soybeans, and from tofu. Fish with soft bones you can eat, like salmon and canned sardines, are good sources. And many foods, like breakfast cereals and juices, contain added calcium.

### Health benefits

What are the health benefits? Your body stores calcium in your bones and teeth. It's what makes them hard and strong. Calcium also may lower your risk for certain cancers and other serious conditions.

### When we don't get enough

What happens if you don't get enough calcium? Well, you can develop weak, fragile bones as you age. This is a disease called "osteoporosis." It affects many older people, especially women. A lack of calcium in a child's diet causes their bones to soften and bend. This is a disease called "rickets." But rickets isn't common in developed countries.

### Conclusion

For more info about the role calcium plays in your health, talk to your doctor.