



Active Nutrition

Newsletter March 2014



Calcium – Why we Need it

We all know we need calcium for strong bones, but the question is - why we lose calcium as we grow older. The simple answer is that the body needs calcium for muscles to move, for nerves to carry messages between the brain and every body part; it helps blood vessels move blood throughout the body and assists in the release hormones and enzymes that affect almost every function in the human body. Bones and teeth are like a bank account – the more we put into it the more we can get out once it is matured. The optimum time for making deposits to the bone bank is in our youth where a combination of exercise and quality high-calcium foods is consumed.



As our body requires calcium, hormones are released which break down the bones to obtain calcium. When there is an excess of calcium in the blood other hormones will be released causing the excess calcium to enter the bones. The more calcium we have stored, the stronger our bones, the less likely we are prone to fractures and osteoporosis as we age.



In women, the hormone oestrogen protects our bone bank, but once the hormone decreases so the protective values of this hormone decreases and women start to lose bone density at a higher rate. This occurs around the age of 50. Men will only reach the high rate of bone loss when they are about 70 years old, thus the reason why women are more prone to osteoporosis.

Current research is suggesting that calcium may also help regulate weight, especially in those who exercise. But again it is the correct types of calcium that assists with weight loss. I look forward to future research into this topic.

Research has shown that the best form of calcium is obtained through food rather than supplements. However for some of the population such as vegetarians, vegans, people on a low calorie diet or are lactose intolerant it is extremely difficult to obtain the correct amount of calcium to maintain a healthy bone bank. When choosing a calcium supplement there are a few things you need to consider such as where it is sourced from. Many supplements are mainly made up of calcium carbonate (chalk – a cheap source) which is very



hard for our bodies to absorb. To ensure that you are absorbing optimal amounts the supplement, ensure that it includes vitamin D and it is best to have it with food. Iron, caffeine, smoking and alcohol can also have negative effects on absorption.

Research has come up with recommended daily intakes – I have put in a table of your daily requirement below. To give you an idea of how much you require, one 250ml glass of trim milk contains 377 mg of calcium.

Age	0 - 6 months	7 - 12 months	1 - 3 years	1 - 8 years	9 - 18 years	19 - 50 years	Pregnant or Breastfeeding	51 - 70 years Men	51 - 70 years Women	71+ years
Daily Requirement	200mg	260 mg	700 mg	1000 mg	1300 mg	100 mg	1000 mg	1000 mg	1200 mg	1200 mg



My Article From 14th March 2014

The benefits of calcium: why do we need it?

Often talking to clients about calcium intake the reaction is “oh is that not an old person’s issue?” My response is the sooner we address our low intake of calcium the better our old age outcome will be.

Basically, we need calcium not just for bone strength, but also for muscle contraction, for the release of hormones and enzymes and blood clotting. Therefore, for those people on restrictive diets or those who exercise excessively should assess their calcium intake.

Calcium is stored in our teeth and bones and is released as required. However, if our intake of calcium is low, especially as we get older, greater amounts of calcium will be lost from the bones weakening our skeleton and leaving us vulnerable to fractures and osteoporosis.

Those who consume large amounts of red meat, carbonated or caffeinated drinks, or alcohol will speed the leaching calcium from their bones. The bad news continues for those who smoke or have digestive issues as they are unable to effectively absorb calcium so increasing their chances of osteoporosis.

A well balanced diet high in vitamins and minerals, fibre and omega-3 is recommended to assist with maintaining a healthy bone bank as is participating in weight resistance exercise. However, if people choose to take calcium supplements, it is recommended that they select good quality organic calcium with limited amounts of calcium carbonate as this is difficult for the body to absorb.



Would you like further information?

Book an appointment for a full nutrition consultation.

No time to make an appointment – no worry I am able to consult via Skype, internet or by telephone. There are no barriers to good information.

Contact me: email info@activenutrition.co.nz

from my web site www.activenutrition.co.nz

Phone me 021 047 6155



Recipe of the Month



Chicken & Broccoli Lasagne (serves 4)

Rice bran cooking oil spray	440g chicken mince
2 cloves garlic, crushed	2 cups sliced mushrooms
400g can chopped tomatoes with garlic & onions	1 1/2 teaspoons Tuscan seasoning
1 tablespoon tomato paste, salt reduced	2 tsp. salt reduced chicken stock powder
4 cups broccoli florets	2 tablespoons olivani spread
2 tablespoons wholemeal flour	1 3/4 cups trim milk
1/4 cup grated mild cheddar cheese	1/4 cup parmesan cheese
Salt and freshly-ground black pepper, to taste	115g instant lasagne (4 sheets)
Green Salad: baby spinach, rocket, lettuce, bean sprouts, basil	

Preheat oven to 200°C. Lightly grease a large ovenproof dish with oil spray.

Brown chicken mince in a non-stick pan with a little oil spray. Add garlic. Cook for 1 minute

Add mushrooms to pan with tomatoes, seasoning and paste. Mix stock powder with 1 cup water.

Add to pan. Bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.

Blanch broccoli for 2-3 minutes then drain

To make cheese sauce, place spread, flour and milk in a non-stick pan and bring to the boil, whisking continuously. Simmer for 1 minute. Add cheese. Season

Spread half the chicken mince over base of lasagne dish. Add half the broccoli. Place half the lasagne on top in a single layer (do not overlap). Repeat layers

Pour cheese sauce over lasagne. Bake for 30 minutes until golden brown. Serve garnished with fresh basil and a green salad