



# Worksheet To Estimate Your Total Daily Calcium Intake

## Step 1. Estimate the Calcium in the Foods You Eat in a Usual Day

The amount of calcium in foods varies depending on the brands you buy. It is important to read labels. The food label does not list calcium in milligrams (mg). Instead, the label lists calcium in each serving as Calcium % (Calcium as a Percent Daily Value or % DV).

### Finding the calcium (mg per serving) from calcium % is as easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. Find the serving size: For example: One serving of low-fat cheese is 1 ounce.
2. Read the % calcium per serving. For example: 1 serving contain 20% calcium.
3. Simply drop the % and replace with a "0" to find the mg calcium per serving.  
For example: 20% calcium = 200 mg calcium,  
Other examples: 30% calcium = 300 mg calcium, 100% calcium = 1000 mg calcium.

For the foods listed below, fill in the number of servings you eat on a usual day.

Foods	Servings per Day	Calcium (mg per serving)	Calcium (mg per day)
<b>Milk</b>	_____	<b>X 300</b>	_____
Most milk contains calcium 30% DV per serving, One serving = 8 ounces fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced fat (2%), whole, lactose-reduced, chocolate milk, buttermilk or goat milk. Include the amount of milk used in cooking and added to soups, puddings, cereals, and other foods.			
<b>Yogurt</b>	_____	<b>X 200 to 350</b>	+ _____
Most yogurts contain calcium 20% to 35% DV per serving. One serving is usually 6 ounces.			
<b>Cheese &amp; Mixed-Cheese Dishes</b>	_____	<b>X 200</b>	+ _____
Most cheeses contain calcium 20% DV. One serving = 1 ounce, 1 slice or 1 1/2 inch cube cheese, 1/4 cup ricotta cheese, 1/2 cup fortified cottage cheese, 1 cup mixed cheese dishes (macaroni and cheese, cheese soufflé, lasagna, manicotti, ziti, or quiche), or 1 slice pizza.			
<b>Calcium-Fortified Beverages</b>	_____	<b>X 100 to 350</b>	+ _____
Most calcium-fortified beverages contain calcium 10% to 35% DV per serving. One serving = 8 ounces of beverages with added calcium. Include fortified almond, coconut, rice, and soy beverages, and some juices.			
<b>Calcium-Fortified Foods</b>	_____	<b>X 100 to 1000*</b>	+ _____
Most calcium-fortified foods contain 10% to 100% DV calcium. Serving sizes vary. Foods include some cereals, granola bars, pastas, rice, breads, and other foods.			
<b>Calcium from Other Foods</b>			+ <b>250</b>
250 mg is the typical calcium intake from other foods with smaller amounts of calcium per serving.			

**Estimated Daily Calcium in the Foods You Eat = (Add all the above) = \_\_\_\_\_**

\*If foods are high-fortified, it is wise to choose smaller portions. For example, if a food contains 100% calcium per serving, or 1000 mg per serving, it would be best to eat a half serving at one time.

## Step 2. Know How Much Calcium You Need Each Day

For strong bones for life, you need the recommended daily calcium intake. You will find your recommended daily calcium intake on the chart below, listed according to your age and gender.

If this is your age	Then you need this much calcium each day (mg = milligrams)
Birth to 12 months	Supplied by formula or breast milk
1 – 3	700 mg*
4 – 8	1000 mg*
9 – 18	1300 mg*
Men 19 – 70 Women 19 – 50	1000 mg*
Women 51 – 70	1200 mg*
Men & Women 71+	1200 mg*

\*Recommended Dietary Allowances, Institute of Medicine, 2010

Rarely, people with medical conditions, or those who take certain medications, need slightly more calcium than listed above. Be sure to speak to your health care provider to find out if your medical conditions or medications increase your calcium needs.

## Step 3. Calculate Calcium Needed to Meet Your Recommendations

For strong bones for life, you need the recommended daily calcium intake. You will find your recommended daily calcium intake on the chart below, listed according to your age and gender.

<b>Take Your Recommended Daily Calcium Intake (from Step 2)</b>	_____ mg
<b>Minus Your Estimated Daily Calcium in the Foods You Eat (from Step 1)</b>	– _____ mg
<b>Equals = Calcium Needed</b>	= _____ mg

- Food is the best source of calcium. If you consume less calcium than recommended, first try to eat more calcium-rich foods to get the calcium you need each day.
- Your body uses calcium best in amounts of 600 mg or less at one time of the day. It is best to spread out the calcium you eat by choosing a calcium-rich food at each meal.
- More calcium is not better. If you get the recommended amount of calcium from the foods you eat each day, you do not need a calcium supplement. Supplements should be taken only when you have difficulty getting enough calcium from food alone.
- If you are considering a calcium supplement, speak to your health care provider to help you select the amount and type of calcium that is right for you.

## Step 4. Estimating Your Total Daily Calcium Intake (If You Take Supplements)

<b>1. Estimated Daily Calcium in the Foods You Eat (from Step 1)</b>	_____ mg
<b>2. Calcium from Calcium Supplements</b>	_____ mg
<b>3. Calcium from Vitamins</b>	_____ mg
<b>4. Estimated Total Daily Calcium Intake (Add 1+2+3)</b>	_____ mg