

## Calcium

### What is Calcium ?

**Calcium has several important functions.**

These include:

- helping build strong bones and teeth
- regulating muscle contractions, including your heartbeat
- making sure blood clots normally

A lack of calcium could lead to a condition called [rickets](#) in children, and osteomalacia or [osteoporosis](#) in later life.

**Sources of calcium include:**

- milk, cheese and other dairy foods
- green leafy vegetables – such as broccoli, cabbage and okra, but not spinach
- soya beans
- tofu
- soya drinks with added calcium
- nuts
- bread and anything made with fortified flour
- fish where you eat the bones – such as sardines and pilchards

***How much calcium do I need?***

Adults aged 19 to 64 need 700mg of calcium a day.

You should be able to get all the calcium you need from your daily diet.

For dietary calculator see

<https://www.cgem.ed.ac.uk/research/rheumatological/calcium-calculator/>

## Vitamin D

One of the commonest and associated reasons people have low calcium is due to Vitamin D

### What is Vitamin D?

**Vitamin D helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body.**

These nutrients are needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy.

A lack of vitamin D can lead to bone deformities such as [rickets](#) in children, and bone pain caused by a condition called osteomalacia in adults.

### Long Term Over The Counter to Boost your Levels

We recommend you should obtain **a long-term maintenance** dose of Vitamin D supplements which you should get over the counter from your local chemist or health food shop. (Note - We cannot prescribe the maintenance dose, as per CCG guidelines).

The recommended dose for maintenance is **1000 units per day**. If you are already on this you do not need to do anything different.

If you are unsure your local pharmacist will be able to advise on a suitable product.

For more information see;

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/>

### What Else Can You do?

Vitamin D Lifestyle and Dietary Advice:

**Sunlight:** 20 – 30 minutes each week between 10 am and 3 pm in summer (April – September) should provide adequate amounts of Vitamin D for most individuals. The elderly and those of non-white ethnicity will have higher requirements

**Diet:** Oily fish such as herring, sardines, mackerel, salmon and tuna are the best dietary source of Vitamin D. Egg yolks and mushrooms also contain small amounts and there are also some foods such as margarines and cereals that are fortified with Vitamin D (check product label)