

Lakeview Community Wellness Center Orthopaedic Connection

Calcium Revisited

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

I read an article recently in a newspaper that said Americans spend one billion dollars each year on Calcium supplements and that many persons may be getting too much Calcium. Hmm. Time to regroup for my readers.

First of all any study linking Calcium to kidney stones and heart attack is based on Calcium supplements not Calcium from food.

Secondly, your body can't make Calcium (as it can Vitamin D). So unless you take in enough by mouth every day your body keeps borrowing it from your bones to maintain an adequate level in the blood stream for homeostasis. That leads to low bone mass which greatly increases risk of fractures.

What Is Too Much?

Upper limit of Calcium per day by age.

- 1 - 3 years 2500mg
- 4 - 8 years 2500mg
- 9 - 18 years 3000mg
- 19 - 50 years 2500mg
- 51 - 70 years 2000mg
- 70 plus years 2000mg

What Is Average Intake?

Studies show that the average American gets 750mg of Calcium per day from their diet.

What Do You Need?

From my Website article "Calcium: The Essential Mineral" I restate the following.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Dietetic Association encourage Calcium intake during all stages of life.

Age 4 - 8: 800mg of Calcium per day with three servings of milk to meet that goal.

Age 9 - 19: Children in this age group should put Calcium deposits in their "bone bank" with a 1300mg intake of Calcium per day.

Age 20 - 35: Bone formation is not occurring as readily as before although peak bone strength is reached during these years. Adults in this age group need at least 1000mg of Calcium per day.

Age 35 - 50: Adults may gradually begin to lose bone so 1000mg of Calcium each day is essential to keep bone loss to a minimum.

Over 50 years: Calcium intake should increase to 1200mg per day to encourage optimal bone health.

Confusion Abounds

No cardiologist can say how Calcium supplements might contribute to a heart attack. There has been no association of Calcium in your blood stream with Calcium in your arteries.

In short reading articles can confuse you (but not this one of course!)

Moderation is best. I have given you the upper limits. Pay attention to that, but get enough Calcium and you will be fine.

What About Vitamin D

You need sufficient levels of Vitamin D to absorb Calcium.

That gets into a whole other area which I wrote 3 articles about in the past. Go to the www.orthopodsurgeon.com archive and find them to re-read. In addition I will revisit Vitamin D next week as it is very importantly linked to Calcium.

See you next week.

Please remember that anyone can make an appointment to see Dr. Haverbush at his office in Alma, at 315 Warwick Dr., across from Gratiot Medical Center. Call 989-463-6092 to make an appointment.

And don't forget every article I have written for Lakeview Area News is on my Website, www.orthopodsurgeon.com. Check it out. I specialize in you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush