



Dairy is the most common source—eight ounces of skim milk has 301 mg and one cup of nonfat plain yogurt has 487 mg. But lots of calcium-rich foods don't come from cows. Dark greens are high in calcium: One cup of boiled kale has 94 mg; one cup of boiled broccoli has 72 mg. An ounce of almonds (about two dozen) has 80 mg. One dried fig has 27 mg; an orange has 52 mg. Canned sardines (108 mg per ounce) and salmon (60 mg per ounce) are great because they have bones.

Your goal should be to have one calcium-rich food with every meal and snack. For breakfast, consider a cup of cottage cheese with a half ounce of almonds, or a calcium-fortified cereal with skim milk (which actually contains a bit more calcium than whole milk). Nonfat sour-cream dip with broccoli makes a great snack. Even desserts can help—who knew apple pie with ice cream could be good for you? (If you can spare the calories, of course.)

You'll want to count milligrams the way you count golf strokes. Try this: Write a C in your PDA or calendar every time you reach 300 mg of calcium. As long as you see three or four C's a day, you're in the zone. □

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## Got Calcium?

Boning up on this essential mineral can add years to your game. By Keri Glassman, M.S., R.D., C.D.N.

Every woman needs strong bones, but golfers, in particular, recognize the importance of maintaining a straight, supple spine and a rock-solid skeleton. According to the first-ever Surgeon General's Report on bone health and osteoporosis, half of women over age 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in their lifetime, and the risk increases with age. Break a bone and you sit out your golf season. Sit out the season and you not only miss out on the fun, you miss out on the weight-bearing exercise that strengthens bones even more.

Your body stops building bone mass after about the age of 30, but maintaining it is an ongoing process. Calcium helps the body perform vital functions, such as regulating your heartbeat, keeping your neurons firing and clotting your blood. (Recent studies have also shown that calcium may help burn fat.) If you don't replenish the calcium in your bloodstream, it draws on the supply in your bones. If this happens too often, your bones weaken. Women between the ages of 31 to 50 need 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day to maintain bone mass, while women 51 and over need 1,200 mg. Yet in my nutrition practice, I often see women who consume barely half the recommended dose.

### TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR CALCIUM INTAKE

- **Space it out.** If you take a supplement such as Viactiv or Caltrate (below), it's most effective if taken 500 mg at a time.
- **Save fiber for later.** High-fiber foods can interfere with calcium absorption, so try to eat them separately from calcium.
- **Stay active.** Weight-bearing exercise, such as walking the course, running and weightlifting, has been shown to improve bone strength.
- **Play on a sunny day.** Vitamin D, which the body makes with exposure to sunlight, aids calcium absorption.
- **Butt out.** Smoking can disrupt calcium absorption, as can alcohol and caffeine. —K.G.



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