

Calcium counts!

Dairy and non-dairy sources of calcium.

How much calcium do you have per day?

This resource looks at the calcium content in dairy and non-dairy foods that may contribute calcium to your diet.

Dairy source	Calcium mg/100g*	Calcium/average portion size	% adult daily need per portion
Milk			
Skimmed	130mg	260mg/200ml glass	34%
Whole	124mg	248mg/200ml glass	33%
Semi skimmed	124mg	248mg/200ml glass	33%
Yogurt and fromage frais			
Greek style plain yogurt	126mg	113mg/2 tablespoons (90g)	16%
Low fat plain yogurt	162mg	130mg/2 tablespoons (80g)	19%
Low fat fruit yogurt	140mg	175mg/125ml pot	25%
Fortified fruit fromage frais	140mg	84mg/60g small pot	12%
Plain virtually fat free fromage frais	127mg	114mg/2 tablespoons (90g)	16%
Cheese			
Cheddar	739mg	222mg/30g	32%
Edam	795mg	239mg/30g	34%
Red Leicester	723mg	217mg/30g	31%
Cottage cheese	127mg	51mg/1 tablespoon (40g)	7%
Low fat soft white	121mg	36mg/average in sandwich (30g)	5%
Danish blue	488mg	146mg/30g	21%
Feta	360mg	108mg/30g	15%
Brie	256mg	77mg/30g	11%
Mozzarella	362mg	109mg/30g	16%

*Calcium in milk is given for 100mls

- Calcium is needed to build and maintain healthy bones, but it also helps keep muscles, nerves and teeth healthy.
- Adults need around 700mg of calcium per day. People diagnosed with conditions like osteoporosis may be advised by their healthcare team to take calcium and vitamin D supplements to help maintain their bone health.
- Teenagers (with their rapid bone growth) have a higher requirement for calcium (1000mg for males and 800mg for females aged 11-18).
- Dairy products are one of the main sources of calcium in the UK diet. A 200ml glass of skimmed milk for example will provide 34% of an adult's daily need for calcium.

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Non-dairy source	Calcium mg/100g*	Calcium/average portion size	% adult daily need per portion
Fortified products			
Fortified soya drink	120mg	240mg/200ml glass	34%
Fortified rice drink	120mg	240mg/ 200ml glass	34%
Fortified soya yogurt alternative	120mg	150mg/125g pot yogurt	21%
White bread*	177mg	127mg/2 slices (72g)	18%
Brown bread*	186mg	134mg/2 slices (72g)	19%
Fruit, veg, nuts and seeds			
Dried Figs	230mg	92mg/ 2 dried (40g)	13%
Curly kale, boiled	150mg	120mg/4 heaped tablespoons (80g)	17%
Watercress	170mg	136mg/1 bowl (80g)	19%
Almonds	240mg	53mg/10 whole nuts (22g)	8%
Sesame seeds	670mg	80mg/1 tablespoon (12g)	11%
Fish with soft bones			
Canned sardines in brine, drained	679mg	340mg/half a can (50g)	49%

For people who exclude dairy foods from their diet, for example those with cow's milk protein allergy or those who are following a vegan diet, the above table provides some alternative non-dairy sources.

It is important to note that plant foods (such as some nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables e.g. rhubarb, spinach) can contain a considerable amount of inhibitory substances known as oxalates and phytates that bind to calcium which decreases how much calcium your body can absorb from them.

For more information on the sources used in this text, please contact postbox@nutrition.org.uk
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