

A practical guide for dietitians

Other sources of calcium

A more sustainable diet does not necessarily have to exclude red meat or dairy altogether – therefore meat and dairy nutrient intakes need not be compromised.

This information sheet provides some useful and practical guidance with regard to plant food sources of nutrients associated with meat and dairy consumption.

Calcium a key nutrient for healthy bones and teeth and helps with muscle function and energy metabolism¹

Did you know?

- Since the mandatory calcium-fortification of white flour, cereal products contribute significantly to calcium intakes.
- Milk contributes to 34-44% and cereal products 30-39% of total calcium intakes in the UK.
- Reducing dairy food consumption and using calcium fortified plant-based drinks and yogurt alternatives will ensure adequate calcium intakes.
- Calcium bioavailability from fortified plant-based drinks and tofu is comparable to dairy milk.
- Calcium bioavailability of low oxalate high calcium green vegetables such as broccoli, kale and pak choi is almost twice that of dairy calcium.

How much do we need?

	DRV for calcium mg ²		Who needs to up their intakes?
	Male	Female	
2-3 year olds	350		Teenage boys and especially girls and women aged 19-64 years.
4-6 year olds	450		
7-10 year olds	550		
11-18 year olds	1000	800	
19 and older	700		

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Top tips for meeting calcium needs

- Calcium fortified plant-based drinks and soya alternatives to yogurt, calcium fortified tofu, nuts, sesame seeds, dried apricots and figs, dark green leafy vegetables and beans are great for calcium.
 - Breakfast time: alternate between dairy and calcium and vitamin D fortified plantbased milk or yogurt alternatives.
 - Lunch: include some beans, nuts or seeds with your meal, for your sandwich fillings go for hummous and / or falafel, or baked beans with a jacket potato.
 - Dinner: always include some beans, tofu, nuts and / or seeds with your meal and serve with dark green vegetables like broccoli, kale and pak choi.
 - Snacks and drinks: a handful of nuts and seeds, a pot of calcium and vitamin D fortified soya alternative to yogurt, dried apricots or figs, use calcium-fortified plantbased drinks for your coffees and tea.

Plant food sources of calcium³

Food	Serving size household	Serving size g	Calcium g /serving
Fortified plant-based alternatives to milk ⁴	A glass	200ml	240
Fortified plain soya alternative to yogurt ⁵	An individual pot	150g	180
Fortified soya alternative to Greek -style yogurt ⁶	Average	150g	180
Tofu – hard / firm	Average	100g	105
Watercress	A small cereal bowl	80g	136
Pak Choi, steamed	1/5 th of a head	80g	85
Okra, raw	16 medium	80g	128
Broccoli, steamed	2-3 spears	80g	35
Kale, boiled	4 heaped tbsp	80g	120
Green / runner beans, boiled	4 heaped tbsp	80g	49
Figs	2-3	30g	70
Apricots	3-4	30g	58
Almonds	Handful	30g	72
Brazil nuts	Handful	30g	51
Hazelnuts	Handful	30g	42
Pistachios	Handful	30g	33
Soya bean nuts (roasted edamame beans) ⁷	Small handful	25g	35



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Tahini paste	1 heaped tsp	19g	129
Sesame seeds	1 tbsp	10g	67
Hummus	2 tbsp	60g	25
Falafel	2	60g	51
Soya beans, boiled	4 tbsp	100g	83
Red kidney beans, canned and drained	4 tbsp	100g	71
Chickpeas, canned and drained	4 tbsp	100g	43
Baked beans, canned in tomato sauce	Small can	200g	84

Animal protein comparisons

200ml semi-skimmed milk = 248mg calcium

Useful links

Click [here](#) to access the One Blue Dot Nutritional Considerations: Calcium document which summarises the evidence around calcium intakes in the UK.

References

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3. Forestfield Software Ltd.. Diet Plan7. McCance & Widdowson 7th summary edition of the composition of foods plus the revised composition of food integrated data set (CoFids). Patent Diet Plan7. 2018.
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6. Alpro UK. Alpro Go On [Internet]. 2018 [cited 9/26/2018]. Available from: <https://www.alpro.com/uk/products?products=plant-based-alternative-to-strained-yogurt>
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