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Nutritious Bites Calcium-Rich Foods

By Mary Grider, Nutrition Educator

What do the following foods have in common: milk, cooked spinach, almonds, fortified orange juice, and sardines? If you guessed they are all food sources of calcium, you would be correct!

Many seniors do not like drinking milk, or they have developed lactose intolerance. As a result, many older adults do not get the required 1000 – 1200 mg of calcium each day.

Researchers have found that the best sources of calcium come from the foods you eat. So, do not rely only on calcium supplements for your daily requirements. Most of us know that calcium is high in dairy products like milk, yogurt, and cottage cheese. What many people don't know is that there are other good food sources of calcium.

Green leafy vegetables like cooked spinach and turnip greens, kale, and broccoli are excellent plant-based sources

of calcium. Fortified juices and cereals are also good choices. In addition, black eye peas, navy beans, chickpeas, almonds, and Brazil nuts are good sources of calcium. If you enjoy sardines and canned salmon, and you eat the small bones, these will also give you added dietary calcium.

Calcium is required for healthy bones and teeth, as well as cell communication, so it is important to get enough in your diet.

Calcium needs enough vitamin D to be absorbed, so be sure to check with your doctor to be sure your blood levels of vitamin D are sufficient. Also, cooking leafy greens and pre-soaking dried beans will make it easier for your body to absorb the calcium.

Be aware, also, that too much alcohol and caffeine can negatively affect the calcium status in your body.

Recipe of the Month

Pumpkin Greek Yogurt Parfait (Serves 4)

This delicious dessert/breakfast from budgetbytes.com will give you a calcium boost and put you in the mood for the holiday season.

Ingredients

- 1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin puree
- 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 cup plain, non-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 package (1/3 box) cinnamon graham crackers



Directions

1. In a bowl, stir together pumpkin puree, pumpkin pie spice, and brown sugar.
2. Unwrap the graham crackers and place them in a gallon-size zip-top bag. Crush the crackers with a rolling pin. Alternatively, you can crush the crackers in a food processor.
3. Layer the graham crackers, seasoned pumpkin puree, and yogurt into four containers (such as small Mason jars).

Keep on Moving Overcoming Barriers

We sometimes make excuses why we don't exercise, such as "I don't have time." However, we can have real barriers to overcome to be physically active. The following suggestions address the two most common barriers and may help you feel comfortable to start exercising.

Physical limitations: Finding appropriate exercises can be challenging if you have joint or balance problems. Talk with your healthcare provider about swimming or water aerobics. You may also be able to work with a physical therapist to design an exercise program specifically to meet your needs.

Safe facilities: Your neighborhood may not have good lighting, or you may not have access to safe sidewalks. Check with your local senior center, YMCA, YWCO, or Family Y about available exercise facilities or classes. Local faith-based organizations or schools may also offer access to exercise equipment or classes.

Monthly Chair Exercise Rear Leg Extensions

This exercise is important for strengthening the buttocks and back of thighs, which helps with daily activities like standing up from a chair and walking.

Begin by standing behind a chair with the right leg slightly in front of the left, holding on to the back of the chair for balance. Keeping your back straight and leaning slightly forward, lift the left foot a few inches off the floor or as high as you comfortably can, squeezing the buttocks as you do this. Do not arch your back. Lower the leg back down and repeat the movement 8 to 10 times. Switch sides to work the other leg. Rest briefly. Do another set of 8 to 10 repetitions for each leg.

Modification: For an extra challenge, change the count of the movement. Lift the leg and hold for 5 seconds, or do short, quick pulse lifts for 5 seconds.

Rear Leg Extensions



For more exercises, visit the following link:

[https://s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/livewellagewell-archive/Exercise+Resources/Chair Exercise Manual 2006.pdf](https://s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/livewellagewell-archive/Exercise+Resources/Chair+Exercise+Manual+2006.pdf)

Living Better Care for Caregivers

Many older adults find themselves still caring for others, whether a spouse, grandchild, or other family member. Since many caregivers would not identify themselves as such, they rarely address the stresses that can come along with having to care for others. Some issues that crop up for caregivers can be social isolation, depression, added financial burdens, and lack of coping skills (or burnout).

Typical signs of stress in a caregiver can be feeling overwhelmed, losing or gaining weight, feeling tired or sad, as well as losing interest in activities you normally enjoy.

For your own health, and the health of those you are caring for, it is important to identify and deal with your areas of stress. Some ways to manage your stress could include:

- Accept help. When others ask what you need, have a list ready - whether it is helping drive to appointments, bringing meals, or just a listening ear.

- Identify if you are not caring for yourself well and the reasons why. Are you not eating or sleeping well? Do you skip your own doctor appointments? Are you showing signs of stress?
- Set realistic goals and boundaries. Set boundaries regarding what you are capable of doing. Set goals for ways you can better care for yourself which could include:
 - getting rest
 - exercising
 - eating well
 - finding a support group
 - maintaining friendships and personal interests
 - keeping scheduled doctor appointments for yourself
 - receiving help

As a caregiver, if you are not in good health, you will not be able to give adequate care to others. It is not being selfish to look after your own needs, as well as the needs of others.

Medication Manager Medication Minders

Many older adults are taking three or more prescription or over the counter medications. Keeping track of when, how, and how much medication you take can directly influence your overall health. Review the tips below and find a solution that works best for your lifestyle and circumstances:

- Use a 7-day pill box and fill at the beginning of the week. The case should be large enough to accommodate your medications, as well as when they need to be taken (morning, noon, night, bedtime).
- Link a daily activity with remembering to take your medications, such as with breakfast or before brushing your teeth.

- Set an alarm on your phone or watch to remind you when to take your medications throughout the day.
- Set up a checklist. Print a list of all your medications, as well as when they need to be taken. Then as soon as you take the medication, check it off your list.
- Enlist help. Have a spouse or loved one remind you to take your medications...or you could decide to take them at the same time.

The tips you choose to use will be based on how many medications you are taking, how often you have to take them each day, and your ability to keep it all organized. Your life could depend on your ability to manage your medications well.

To Your Health

Nutrition for Wound Healing

(By Whitney Bignell, PhD, RDN, LD)

As we age, we may find that wounds don't heal as quickly as when we were young. There are many reasons for this delayed wound-healing, such as loss of skin elasticity and other changes to our skin cells. Diabetes, cardiovascular disease, renal disease, and other chronic conditions also contribute to an increased chance of having a non-healing or slow-to-heal wound. Nutrition is vitally important to promote wound healing, especially for surgical wounds, pressure ulcers, or diabetic foot wounds.

Key Nutrients for Wound Healing

Calories. Your body needs more energy to help heal wounds. So, it's important to eat enough calories. If you don't have a good appetite, consider drinking a supplemental beverage, such as Ensure®, Boost®, or Glucerna®.

Protein. This nutrient is the building block of cells, so you need more protein if you have non-healing wounds. Focus on good sources of lean protein, such as skinless chicken breast, fish, eggs, beans, and low-fat dairy products.

Vitamin C. This micronutrient plays a key role in collagen formation, and collagen is the main structural protein found in the skin. Enjoy citrus fruits, such as oranges, strawberries, bell peppers, and tomatoes to get an extra dose of vitamin C.

Vitamin A. This micronutrient is important for cell reproduction, and your body needs to create new cells to heal wounds. Foods high in vitamin A include carrots, sweet potatoes, and leafy greens, such as kale and spinach.

Zinc. This micronutrient is important for many aspects of wound healing, such as cell reproduction and forming collagen. Enjoy fortified cereals, meat, and seafood to get enough zinc.

If you are having problems with non-healing wounds, ask your healthcare professional for a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN), who can help you plan a diet to meet your needs, or suggest additional supplements, such as Juven®, that may be helpful.

Upcoming Events

A Matter of Balance Workshops

Oglethorpe County Senior Center
Dates and Times To Be Announced

Living Well Workshops

Newton County Senior Center
October 17 – November 21, 2018
Wednesday mornings
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

If you'd like to host a workshop,
please contact Whitney Bignell
(web1975@uga.edu)

Check out our website for upcoming
workshops:
<http://www.negahealthmatters.org/index.php/calendar-2/>

Support for this newsletter is also provided by:

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Questions or Comments? Contact us!

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