

SEVEN MISCONCEPTIONS PEOPLE HAVE ABOUT CALCIUM

Awareness about calcium's importance is on the rise. Savvy, health-conscious consumers look for calcium-fortified products because they understand the benefits. Furthermore, the minimum recommended daily allowance of calcium was recently raised for men, women and children of all ages.

But while many people may have heard about calcium's importance, they still have many misconceptions. Here are the top seven misconceptions about calcium, and the role it plays in better health.

1. ALL CALCIUM IS CREATED EQUAL.

Doctors and nutritionists agree, it takes a natural balance of minerals to build and maintain strong bones and teeth, manage weight and support healthy bodies - the natural balance of minerals that you can only get from dairy calcium (calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and zinc). The extreme focus on calcium alone has inhibited the promotion of a balanced approach for mineral supplementation, particularly for segments of the population at risk for osteoporosis. Several studies show that milk minerals, widely accepted in Asia as the best source of bone building supplements, contain the appropriate balance of minerals and micro-nutrients for optimal bone health.

2. ALL CALCIUM HAVE THE SAME BENEFIT.

Only about 25-30% of the calcium we ingest is used by the body. So the bio-availability of that calcium must be very high, as some forms of calcium are better absorbed and utilized than others. Calcium from milk enjoys the highest percentage of bio-availability because it is easily absorbed in the human digestive tract. Calcium carbonate, on the other hand, is more difficult to absorb and should be taken with a main meal in order to be effective.

3. DAIRY PRODUCTS ARE FATTENING, AND CALCIUM DOES NOT EFFECT WEIGHT LOSS.

A number of studies have been published over the past two years that contradict this misconception. One in particular, conducted by Purdue researchers, found that women who ingested more calcium lost more weight. No matter how active the women in the study were, those who ingested more calcium lost more body fat than those who consumed less than the daily requirement. Dorothy Teegarden, Ph.D. and principle investigator for the study said that calcium-rich diets may suppress a hormone that is involved with how fats are synthesized and stored in cells. Dr. Micheal Zemel at the University of Tennessee has found that dairy products (calcium from dairy sources) achieve significantly better weight reduction than calcium supplements such as calcium carbonate. Results of a clinical trial published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition are reported to show that increasing dietary calcium speeds up weight and fat loss. Weight loss was enhanced when the calcium was derived from low-fat milk products compared to an equivalent amount of supplemental calcium.

4. BONES ARE THE ONLY PART OF OUR BODIES THAT NEED CALCIUM.

Certainly calcium builds and maintains healthy bone tissue, but it also plays a vital role in hundreds of other physiological functions. Calcium strengthens teeth and keeps gum tissue healthy. It helps maintain a regular heartbeat, blood pressure and neural impulse transmission, as well as lower cholesterol and prevent heart disease. Calcium helps muscles grow and contract properly to discourage muscle cramps. Much like antioxidants, calcium is involved with proper blood clotting mechanisms and protects cells from free radical damage while joining with other nutrients to provide energy and build the proteins RNA and DNA. Calcium also assists in neuromuscular activity and skin integrity, as well as preventing pre-eclampsia in pregnant women.

5. A NORMAL DIET PROVIDES ENOUGH CALCIUM.

While milk and dairy products contain the highest percentage of bio-available calcium, they're often excluded from calorie-conscious diets. Some people avoid milk because they're lactose intolerant (or think they are). There are other sources of calcium, but these sources require more servings per day to meet the daily requirements. Foods high in "empty calories", foods that interfere with absorption and foods that promote the excretion of calcium are also responsible for a lack of calcium in most diets.

6. EXERCISE HAS NO EFFECT ON CALCIUM ABSORPTION.

As with all things, there is a relationship between moderation and health in exercise and calcium absorption. Overdoing it with consistently heavy exercise interferes with calcium uptake, while regular exercise enhances potential calcium absorption.

7. BONE LOSS ONLY OCCURS AMONG OLDER WOMEN.

Everybody needs to worry about bone loss. Peak bone mass is reached at 35, and then the body's process of accumulating bone mass begins to reverse itself. Medications can decrease bone density for people of any age. Thyroid replacement therapies, barbiturates, anti-seizure drugs and chemotherapy agents can rob people of bone mineral density, regardless of age, (at around age 35), when the process begins to reverse itself. An estimated two million men in the United States suffer from reduced bone mass. Men who smoke, drink, experience hypogonadism or have been treated for prostate disease with androgen suppression, are at risk for osteoporosis. Steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs can cause the loss of bone tissue later in life. Sudden drops in estrogen levels, common among very athletic or menopausal women, require greater amounts of calcium.

Omical is a unique product comprised of minerals isolated from milk - the ideal source for isolating minerals. It offers a premium source of bone-building supplements, because in addition to calcium, Omical contains essential micro- and macro-nutrients such as chloride, potassium, magnesium, phosphorous, zinc, copper and iron - in amounts that promote optimal bone health.

"If you think all calcium is the same. I've got a bone to pick with you"