

# Calcium & Vitamin D

## How to use this medication

### What is it



Calcium is a mineral. It is important for healthy bones. Vitamin D helps the body absorb and use the calcium you have eaten.

### You need it every day



Calcium supplements are taken with each meal (2-3 times per day). Vitamin D is taken only once a day.

### How much calcium do I need each day?



Your doctor will tell you how much calcium to take. The list below can help you determine the right dose of calcium.

- **Age 4-8** 400 mg twice per day (800 mg)
- **Age 9-50** 500 mg twice per day (1000 mg)
- **Age >50** 400 mg three times per day (1200 mg)

### Where can I get calcium?



Calcium is available in dairy products. As a general rule a glass of milk (1 cup), a small container of yogurt, or a piece of cheese the size of your thumb will provide about 300 mg of calcium.

You can also buy calcium tablets, chews, or liquid. Ask your doctor about the right dose for you.

### How much vitamin D do I need each day?



The amount of vitamin D you need depends on your age. Your doctor will tell you the right amount of vitamin D to take.

- **Age 19-50** 400 - 1,000 IU per day
- **Age >50** 800 - 2,000 IU per day

### Where can I get vitamin D?



The most natural way to get vitamin D is by exposure to sunlight. Vitamin D is made in your skin when it is exposed to the sun. Milk is also fortified with vitamin D. You can also buy vitamin D tablets.

## What you need to do

### Good for your bones



Make sure you know the right amount of calcium and vitamin D for you. Remember calcium and vitamin D are good for healthy bones.

### Bone mineral density testing



Ask your doctor about bone mineral density (BMD) testing.

## Side effects & important facts

### Bloating & constipation



Bloating and constipation can happen as your body adjusts to the effects of the calcium supplement.

### Vitamin D



When taken properly, vitamin D is virtually free of side effects. Too much vitamin D can cause high calcium levels. High calcium levels can cause increased thirst & urination, nausea, vomiting, and constipation.