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In this issue

Life Extension Update Exclusive

Majority of Americans fail to meet calcium requirements

Health Concern

Osteoporosis

Featured Products

Calcium Citrate with Vitamin D

Bone Restore

Life Extension

UltraMetabolism by Mark Hyman, MD

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Majority of Americans fail to meet calcium requirements

The May, 2007 issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* published the finding of researchers from the Program on Prevention Outcomes and Practices at Stanford University that despite well publicized recommendations concerning the need for calcium to aid in osteoporosis prevention, 60 percent of a sampling of Americans fail to receive an adequate intake.

Jun Ma, Rachel A. Johns, and Randall S. Stafford analyzed data from the 1999 to 2002 National Health and Nutrition Survey (NHANES), which involved 5,094 men and 5,760 women aged 19 and older. The current study included 4,477 men and 5000 women for whom there was reliable dietary data. Daily calcium intake was calculated from the results of dietary interviews provided by the participants. Supplemental calcium intake was estimated from the subjects' intake of prescription and nonprescription supplements, and calcium-containing antacids.

Just forty percent of the study population was found to meet age-specific national calcium adequate intake levels, and less than half of the participants reported using calcium supplements. Participants who were at low as well as high risk of osteoporosis were more likely to have adequate intake levels than those at moderate risk, although those at moderate risk were more likely to use calcium supplements than subjects at low risk. Men, ethnic minorities, and individuals who did not graduate from high school were more likely to have inadequate calcium intake and were less likely to use calcium supplements. Using supplements increased the odds of meeting the adequate intake recommendation by a factor of four compared with nonusers.

The authors acknowledged that men and minorities have been underrepresented in osteoporosis clinical trials and interventions. "Targeting men and ethnic minorities of moderate and high osteoporosis risk to increase their calcium consumption through diet, or through diet and supplements when necessary, is an important consideration," they observe.

"Our results show that, overall, most US adults do not meet daily calcium adequate intake levels through diet alone, and that, among those taking supplements, supplemental calcium is often inadequate to overcome the deficits between dietary intake and the recommendations," the authors conclude. "Our finding of lower calcium consumption among men, ethnic minorities, and the socioeconomically disadvantaged than in their respective counterparts supports the Surgeon General's call for including these subpopulations, along with the traditionally targeted older white women, among the priority populations in bone health improvement interventions."

Health Concern

Osteoporosis

Many studies have shown that calcium can reduce bone loss and suppress bone turnover. Calcium intake is a foundation of

osteoporosis prevention (Kasper DL et al 2005). Calcium requires the presence of vitamin D for maximum absorption.

Although calcium is readily available in dairy products and other dietary sources, many Americans are calcium deficient. There are a few possible explanations for calcium deficiencies:

- Decreased vitamin D availability, possibly due to kidney or liver problems or insufficient exposure to sunshine (ultraviolet radiation)
- Decreased gastrointestinal tract absorption due to stomach or intestinal problems
- Increased loss of calcium from the kidneys
- Increased loss of calcium from the colon and bowels
- Low dietary calcium intake
- Medications that inhibit calcium absorption

There are many forms of calcium on the market, including the common calcium carbonate, calcium gluconate, and calcium citrate. Of these, calcium citrate is the most easily absorbed and a good way to receive supplemental calcium.

It may also turn out that not only is supplementation vital to preventing and treating osteoporosis but that the timing of the supplementation is important. For example, in a study of healthy volunteers, two doses of 500 mg calcium and 400 IU vitamin D taken six hours apart produced a more prolonged decrease in serum parathyroid hormone levels (low levels of which indicate adequate calcium levels) than a single dose with the same total amounts of calcium and vitamin D.

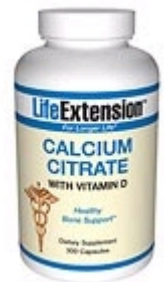
http://www.lef.org/protocols/metabolic_health/osteoporosis_01.htm

Featured Products

Calcium Citrate with Vitamin D

Calcium is an essential mineral that is often inadequately supplied, inefficiently absorbed, or excreted faster than it is being assimilated. The citrate salt of calcium has been documented to be well absorbed and utilized by the body.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00412.html>



Bone Restore

A problem overlooked by most doctors is that loss of bone density is associated with deficiencies of not just calcium, but a host of other nutrients including magnesium and vitamin D3. In order for calcium to prevent bone loss, adequate amounts of vitamin D3, zinc, manganese and other nutrients should be available so that calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus can be incorporated into the bone matrix. Another issue that many people are not aware of is that many forms of calcium do not absorb particularly well.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00811.html>



UltraMetabolism, by Mark Hyman, MD

How to ignite the fat burning DNA hidden inside your body

...for the first time ever, Mark Hyman, MD unveils his groundbreaking but simple plan for automatic weight loss in his new book, UltraMetabolism. Never before have all seven keys to permanent weight loss been integrated into a single plan. Based on the cutting-edge science of Nutrigenomics, in UltraMetabolism, you'll discover:

- How to re-program your genes to automatically LOSE weight and GAIN health...
- Why you actually need to eat carbs to lose weight...
- Why eating less and exercising more can actually make you fat, and much more...

Dr. Hyman is a leader in a rapidly emerging field called functional medicine and both he and UltraMetabolism have been profiled in Life Extension Magazine in the past. Dr. Hyman explains how food talks to your DNA and can either switch on health and vitality or disease and obesity depending on what you eat.

Right now Dr. Hyman has made special arrangements for you to download a sneak preview of UltraMetabolism free of charge, plus a metabolism-boosting 60-minute online video and a free 7-step course on how to re-program your genes to turn on health and vitality and turn off disease and obesity.

<http://www.ultrametabolismspecial.com/extension1>

If you have questions or comments concerning this issue or past issues of *Life Extension Update*, send them to ddye@lifeextension.com or call 954 202 7716.

For longer life,



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