



NATURAL CALCIUM IS THE WAY TO GO

Calcium should be consumed in natural forms as far as possible. Here are some natural sources

What does calcium do to your body?

Calcium helps keep the weight off

Research suggests that if you don't get enough calcium in your diet, you're likely to be overweight. An adequate supply appears to make it easier to maintain a healthy weight. The reason has to do with your body's response to a calcium deficit.

When you're low, your body thinks you're starving and enters emergency mode, releasing parathyroid hormone from four glands in your neck. This hormone stimulates your bones to release some calcium into your bloodstream. Your kidneys also deliver a dose of a hormone called calcitriol, a form of vitamin D, to increase your ability to absorb calcium. Hence, a high calcium intake suppresses these hormones so your body stores less fat and also breaks it down easily.

Calcium protects your heart:

If you're low on calcium, you're more likely to have high blood pressure. An adequate supply of calcium helps muscles - including your heart muscle - do their work of contracting

and relaxing. Calcium helps your nervous system regulate the level of pressure in your arteries.

Calcium maintains healthy teeth:

The first signs of osteoporosis are sometimes found by a dentist, because the structure of the jawbone is affected. Owing to the advan-

tages of calcium, the market today is flooded with innumerable kinds of calcium supplements. However, it is important that we consume calcium in natural forms as far as possible and resort to supplements only whenever necessary.

Best natural sources

Sunshine: One of the most vital nutrients

required to improve calcium absorption in the body is available in abundance and also comes for free - sunlight. It is the best source of vitamin D, which helps

in the absorption of calcium. Therefore, bask in the sunlight everyday for at least 20-40 minutes. Best time to do this is before 11:00 am and after 2:30 pm

Tomatoes: You can trade your calcium pills for a tomato. The vitamin C content of the tomato helps to form and maintain collagen that provides strength and elasticity for our teeth and bones. Eat them fresh, not processed. 4 tomatoes is enough for your required dietary allowance every day.

Sesame seeds: These tiny seeds can contribute a lot towards your calcium intake. Toss them in salad, add tahini butter to your toast, splash some in your vegetables, mix them in your raitas and you are set.

Leafy green vegetables: The powerhouse of calcium - coriander, fenugreek, and spinach are rich sources of easily absorbable calcium. Coriander can be used as a garnish for almost anything. Methi aloo paratha, methi

Drinking more milk and dairy products is the general myth associated with increasing calcium intake. Milk does have calcium, however, the body cannot absorb it easily.

