

The Calcium Myth

Courtesy of Functional Medicine University

Calcium may well be the world's most popular nutritional supplement.

Why is that?

The main reason for calcium's popularity is just good-old-fashioned Madison Avenue propaganda.

For four decades Americans have been the beneficiaries of major advertising campaigns from the dairy industry promoting milk as the ideal food, especially for growing children. And milk's calcium content has been its major selling point. Everyone has just come to accept "on good authority" that calcium is in a class by itself as a nutrient. In reality, despite its high profile, calcium is no more important, or any more likely to be deficient, than many other mineral nutrients.

In the last several years, much media hype has been directed to osteoporosis and calcium supplementation.

According to an article in Barrons, billions of calcium tablets were swallowed by a misguided American public in 1986 and 1987 in the name of strong bones. Scarcely a few grams is likely to have ever found its way into osseous tissue, as tons of chalk were flushed down millions of toilets.

Some nutrition "authority" came up with the notion that a person is in "calcium balance" if they swallow calcium at a rate faster than their bowels and kidneys can dump the stuff. That the gullible public bought it is no surprise. But that health care professionals are as easily duped is a sad state of affairs.

My Doctor said I need 1200 mgs of Calcium to prevent Osteoporosis!

There are a few little-known facts about osteoporosis that you must understand. The truth is physicians are not helping their osteoporosis patients at all -- even while throwing tons of calcium at their bones. The sad reality is that millions of patients are swallowing billions of calcium tablets, the calcium from which largely ends up being flushed down the toilet.

Precious little of this calcium ever finds its way into osteoporotic bone. If you want to really prevent osteoporosis then you must rid yourself of the misconceptions held by all the mass media and mis-informed physicians.

Learn these facts:

Osteoporosis has almost nothing to do with a deficiency of calcium.

There are several other minerals and trace minerals that are far more important than calcium in reversing osteoporosis.

You need to get a clear mental picture of what osteoporosis is -- and what it is not.

Osteoporosis is NOT a deficiency of calcium in the bone. There is a condition in which the bone structure is intact but there is just a deficiency of calcium. This condition is called Osteomalacia. Osteoporosis, on the other hand, is a breakdown in the matrix of the bone. The matrix is the fibrous protein backbone upon which mineralization occurs in osseous tissue.

Have you ever been on a construction site when they were pouring a concrete slab for a floor or a sidewalk? Do you remember seeing the metal rods or mesh onto which they poured the concrete? Well, if we make an analogy between a sidewalk and bone, you can think of the concrete as the minerals of the bone and the reinforcing rods as the bone matrix. What would happen to that sidewalk if they poured the concrete without reinforcing rods? In no time the concrete would crumble and fall apart.

What happens to an osteoporotic bone? With the deterioration of the fibrous protein matrix the minerals cannot be held. The bone gradually loses mineral density over time.

What happens when you take calcium supplement? Mostly nothing.

If the fibrous tissue of the bone couldn't hold the calcium it already had, neither can it hold the calcium supplement. The truth is that osteoporosis does involve calcium but no more than it involves any of the other minerals and trace minerals required for bone formation -- including **silica, magnesium, manganese, copper, selenium, iodine, and phosphorus.**

Each of these minerals is, qualitatively speaking, every bit as important as calcium in bone formation. One very interesting study showed that supplementing with trace minerals with no additional calcium cut the amount of bone loss in half in osteoporosis patients.

Are you beginning to realize that you need a little more than a calcium supplement to help your osteoporosis patients?

Don't be fooled by the notion that you will develop osteoporosis without taking a truck-load of calcium. Remember, it takes having a **healthy balance of all your essential mineral to prevent osteoporosis.**

If you want to be confident that you are taking adequate amounts of the essential minerals and more important "absorbing" your minerals, then I encourage you to have an essential mineral blood test **Essential Mineral Blood Test.**

Having the knowledge that you are obtaining all the essential minerals will go a long way in preventing mineral-induced osteoporosis.

