

# Baritz Wellness Center, P.C.

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## Calcium, Know Your Calcium

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We all know that calcium is important, what is unclear is what type of calcium can be best utilized by the body and what other factors are important to consider when taking supplements.

Calcium is by far the most abundant mineral in the human body. Over 99% of total body calcium is found in the bones and teeth giving them their solid structure. Calcium plays a critical role in maintaining blood pressure, is essential for muscle contractions, maintaining heart beat, maintaining a strong immune system, easing insomnia, secretion of hormones and secretion of digestive enzymes. Bone is a living tissue and serves as a kind of “calcium bank” releasing calcium into the blood as it is needed and absorbing calcium from the body as it is available. When the demands of the body are greater than the amount of calcium adsorbed from diet the calcium released from bones is not replaced and a person is at risk for developing osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is called the “silent disease” and it used to be believed that it’s presence could not be detected till you already had bone thinning. However the warning signs listed below will give you some idea of your bone health.<sup>1</sup>

Feeling depressed	Body feels fragile	Premature gray hair	Periodontal disease
Consume soft drinks	Have weak muscles	Over fifty	Never given birth
Consume white flour	Bone pain	History of over dieting	Fear of getting bumped
Consume white sugar	Low back pain	Menopause before 45	Cramps in legs, feet or toes
Have soft teeth	Joint tenderness	Transparent skin	(especially at night)
Regularly overeat	Chronic fatigue	Stooped posture	Lack of fitness
Tight jaw or grind teeth	Heart Palpations	Tooth plaque	Brittle or soft fingernails
Morning stiffness	Hot flashes	Receding gums	Your mother had osteoporosis

For many years the only consideration in calcium supplements was the number milligrams. More recently it has become apparent supplements have a wide range of bioavailability. What good is a supplement if it isn’t absorbed? Not much! On x-ray I have many times seen undigested pills in a patient’s colon. Many supplements such as Tums® are made with calcium carbonate. This is the same calcium that is found in oyster shells and sidewalks. If it was easily digestible then oyster shells would dissolve in the ocean and sidewalks would tend to melt in the rain.

Calcium absorption requires Omega-3 oils, which are generally lacking in the American diet. The parathyroid glands regulate blood calcium levels and temporary support to build up the parathyroid glands is often indicated for best utilization of calcium supplements. Bone is specialized tissue formed from much more than calcium and contains numerous cofactors that are needed for bone health.

### FDA recommendations for daily calcium intake

9 to 24 years old	1,200 to 1,300
25 to 50 year old	1,000
Over 50 years old	1,200
Pregnant or lactating	1,300

### Some non-dairy sources of calcium

Some Almonds, broccoli, beet greens, kale, mustard greens, bok choy, spinach, mackerel, kelp, canned salmon & canned sardines with soft bones.

### Exercise

Weight training is a key component of any bone building program and I recommend regular strength training exercises. One good system is found in the book *The Slow Burn Fitness Revolution* by Frederic Hann, available from Amacon.com

***To have a custom program created for you or for a free consult call 508 583-2565***

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