Caution: Low Levels of This Key Mineral Could Shrink Your Lifespan ...

Getting a bit more calcium in your diet could help you live longer, new research suggests.

Researchers found that men who consumed the most calcium in food were 25 percent less likely to die over the next decade. None of the men took calcium supplements.

The findings are in line with previous research linking higher calcium intake with lower mortality in both men and women.

Men in the top third based on their calcium intake were getting nearly 2,000 milligrams a day, on average. The U.S. Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for calcium intake is 1,000 to 1,200 milligrams.

Calcium could influence mortality risk in many ways, for example by reducing blood pressure, cholesterol, or blood sugar levels.

Sources:
» Reuters March 12, 2010
» American Journal of Epidemiology February 19, 2010

Comments:

Calcium is often touted as the solution for building strong bones, but although the vast majority of this mineral is stored in your bones and teeth, it’s important for other bodily processes as well.
For instance, calcium plays a role in muscle contraction, blood clotting and cell membrane function. It also helps regulate the activity of enzymes, and if your body does not have enough available calcium, it can wreak havoc on your health -- and even shorten your lifespan.

According to the latest research, men who ate the most calcium-rich diets -- taking in nearly 2,000 milligrams of calcium a day -- had a 25 percent lower risk of dying from all causes, and a 23 percent lower risk of dying from heart disease, compared to men who ate about 1,000 milligrams a day.

Calcium’s benefit likely came from several areas, including reducing blood pressure, cholesterol or blood sugar levels, according to researchers.

Calcium is so important to your body’s ability to function that if you don’t have enough of it in your blood from dietary sources, your body will begin to use stores of the mineral from your bones.

This is why it’s so important to include calcium-rich foods in your diet.

**What are the Best Sources of Calcium?**

The best food source of calcium out there is raw milk (NOT conventional, pasteurized milk) and other raw dairy products. One of the worst side effects of pasteurization is that it **renders much of the calcium contained in raw milk insoluble**, so it is best to drink your milk raw if you want to absorb its calcium.

Dark green, leafy vegetables, including spinach, turnip greens, mustard greens and collard greens, are another great source of calcium, as are sesame seeds.

Calcium from dietary sources is usually more completely absorbed than calcium from supplements, so eating more of these foods is a simple way to make sure your calcium levels stay at a healthy level.

Vitamin D is also important for calcium absorption, so along with your raw milk and vegetables, make sure that your **vitamin D levels are optimized** as well.
Additionally, we are going to come out with an extraordinary calcium supplement soon, so keep an eye out for it in the next few months.

**More is Not Better When it Comes to Calcium**

Taking too much calcium, especially in supplement form, will not do your body any favors. In fact, taking more than 3,000 milligrams per day has been linked to elevated blood calcium levels, or hypercalcemia. This condition can cause calcium to accumulate outside of your bone cells, leading to soft tissue calcification.

Dr. Robert Thompson M.D. also wrote an entire book, *The Calcium Lie*, addressing the important issue of over-supplementing with calcium. Although he’d been able to resolve many illnesses with supplements and herbs and other less toxic alternatives to drugs, he’d come to realize that similar to the pharmaceutical industry, the nutrition industry had its own flaws.

He concluded that enormous amounts of money were being wasted on supplements that had little or no health benefit, and in some cases could actually worsen your health.

One of the tenets of his book is that bone is composed of at least a dozen minerals, and if you focus exclusively on calcium supplementation you are likely going to worsen your bone density, and will actually increase your risk of osteoporosis!

Dr. Thompson believes that the over-consumption of calcium in the goal of preventing osteoporosis creates other mineral deficiencies and imbalances that will also increase your risk of heart disease, kidney stones, gallstones, osteoarthritis, hypothyroidism, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Interestingly, he proposes that one of the best practical alternatives is the use of naturally occurring ionic supplements, as ionic minerals are the most plentiful form of minerals found on earth. He believes that almost everyone needs trace minerals, not just calcium, because you simply cannot get all the nutrients you need through food grown in mineral-depleted soils.
Dr. Thompson believes that unprocessed salts, such as Himalayan salt, are one of the best sources of these ionic trace minerals, which are responsible for catalyzing many important functions in your body. You can read more about this interesting connection here, but in the meantime I encourage you to eat a variety of whole foods from my nutrition plan, especially those that are right for your nutritional type.

This will give you access to a variety of whole-food sources of calcium that will keep you healthy and strong.

If it also important to recognize that although this study did not address it, magnesium may be even more important than calcium. If you do take calcium supplements you will want to make sure it is balanced with enough high-quality magnesium.