

Build Strong Bones - One Step at a Time

Step 1: Building strong bones - requirements

Calcium is needed to build healthy, strong bones and teeth. Calcium is mainly found in foods from the Milk & Alternatives Food Group. Following Canada's Food Guide is the best way for children and teens to get the nutrients they need to be healthy.

Step 2: Understanding the issues

Many children and teens drink more pop and other sugary beverages instead of milk. Research has shown that drinking pop will take the place of other healthy beverages, like milk. This can lead to an increased risk of developing osteoporosis.

Step 3: Determining how much calcium is needed

This table shows how many Food Guide Servings of Milk & Alternatives are recommended each day and the calcium recommendations for each age group.

Age Group	# of Food Guide Servings per Day	Calcium - Recommended
Children 4 - 8 years	2	800 mg
Children 9 - 13 years	3-4	1300 mg
Children 14 - 18 years	3-4	1300 mg

Step 4: Choosing healthy options

One cup of cow's milk contains 300-345 mg of calcium. White milk and chocolate milk have the same amount of calcium. There are a many other foods and beverages that you can choose that contain calcium if your child does not like to drink milk.

Food or Beverage	Amount of calcium
Cheddar cheese (50 g)	360 mg
Fruit yogurt, non-fat (3/4 cup)	266 mg
Fortified soy or rice beverage (1 cup)	319 mg
Firm tofu, set with calcium (3/4 cup)	347 mg
Calcium fortified orange juice (1 cup)	370 mg
Canned salmon, with bones (1/2 cup)	187 mg
Spinach, boiled (1/2 cup)	129 mg
Toasted Almonds (1/4 cup)	99 mg
Cooked beans: navy, kidney, chickpea (3/4 cup)	40-90 mg