

## Calcium Supplements and Heart Attacks

### What is the problem?

We all know that calcium is good for the bones and that it can reduce the risk of fracture by 26%. – but can too much calcium be harmful?

In 2008, a clinical trial studied the risk of heart disease in older women who were given calcium supplements. The results showed an increased risk of heart attacks in the women who were taking 1,000 mg. of calcium citrate – a highly absorbable form of calcium.

Now, researchers have gathered a number of clinical studies that include calcium supplements and combined the results. After analyzing the data, they conclude that calcium supplements (without vitamin D) are indeed associated with an increased risk of heart attacks. We are not quite sure about the mechanisms that were responsible for this result, but there are some potentially important concerns that these findings raise.

### What can you do?

Before you take a daily calcium supplement, know how much calcium you are eating in your diet and DO NOT exceed your daily requirement. Since the studies did not control for individuals who eat a calcium-rich diet, adding a 1,000 mg supplement may exceed the amount that generally that recommended. To find recommended calcium amounts. [http://www.americanbonehealth.org/images/stories/Calcium\\_Vit\\_D\\_2010.pdf](http://www.americanbonehealth.org/images/stories/Calcium_Vit_D_2010.pdf).

### How can you be sure?

Use the CALCIUM RULE OF 300. Start with the number of servings of dairy per day and multiply that by 300. Then add 300 if you eat a well-balanced diet. The total is your calcium intake from diet. Determine your daily requirement and add a supplement – if necessary – to reach your goal. *NOTE: you might be able to reach your daily requirement by adding another serving of dairy or fortified juice!*

<b>CALCIUM RULE OF 300</b>	Number of Servings	Multiply by 300 mg		Total
<b>Dairy or fortified juices</b> <i>For example: 1 cup low fat milk or yogurt, 1½ ounces of cheese, 1 cup calcium fortified juice.</i>		X 300 mg	=	
<b>Calcium from a balanced diet</b>			+	<b>300</b>
<b>My total calcium from diet</b>			=	

**BOTTOM LINE** - Only take calcium supplements to make up the difference between your daily requirement and what you get in your diet.