

# How to get your calcium if you're lactose-intolerant

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(HealthDay)—With research finding that the body prefers calcium from

food, not supplements, it can be a challenge to meet daily requirements if you're lactose-intolerant.

On average, adults need about 1,000 milligrams of [calcium](#) a day. Fortunately, there are choices within many food groups that deliver on calcium.

Leafy greens are a great calcium source, and at the top of the list are cooked spinach, collard and turnip greens. Salad lovers, reach for raw kale.

### **Calcium Content in Greens**

- Cooked spinach, collard greens and turnip greens, 1 cup: 200 mg
- Raw kale, 1 cup: 90 mg

Among legumes, beans and white beans in particular are calcium-rich, as are green soybeans, better known as edamame. Some brands of firm tofu made with [calcium sulfate](#) have more than half the daily requirement in a serving—check nutrition labels before you buy.

### **Calcium Content in Legumes**

- Cooked white beans, 1 cup: 160 mg
- Green soybeans, 1 cup: 260 mg
- Firm tofu, 3.5 ounces: up to 650 mg

Some seeds and nuts also pack in calcium along with their unique mix of healthy fats, protein and carbohydrates. Choices include [sesame seeds](#) and tahini (sesame seed butter), chia seeds and amaranth, a seed that cooks up like a grain. Enjoy almonds as a snack or spread almond butter

on your morning toast.

## **Calcium Content in Seeds and Nuts**

- Sesame seeds, 1 ounce: 280 mg
- Tahini, 2 tablespoons: 100 mg
- Chia seeds, 2 tablespoons: 180 mg
- Amaranth, 1/2 cup uncooked: 150 mg
- Almond butter, 1 tablespoon: 90 mg
- Almonds, 20: 60 mg

Among fruits, fresh and dried figs, oranges and tangy rhubarb all have some calcium.

## **Calcium Content in Fruits**

- Dried figs, 1/2 cup: 120 mg
- Fresh fig, 1 large: 22 mg
- Orange, medium: 60 mg
- Rhubarb, raw, 1 cup: 100 mg

If you'd like to include some true dairy foods in your diet, consider lactose-free and lactose-reduced foods or try lactase tablets or drops. Among dairy foods, it's hard to beat plain yogurt for its calcium content, which is more than 400 mg in eight ounces.

Keep in mind that your body needs vitamin D to process calcium and protect bone health. Because D is hard to get naturally, it's a supplement that might be of benefit to you. If you're concerned about meeting these nutrient goals, talk to your doctor or a registered dietitian.

**More information:** The U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases has more on crafting a [diet for lactose intolerance](#), including foods to avoid.

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