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**FOODS FOR BONE HEALTH**

Celebrate May, National Osteoporosis Prevention Month, by enjoying the sunshine and choosing foods for bone health. Don’t think osteoporosis prevention is just for the elderly, as you are never too old or too young to improve your bones. The best defense against developing osteoporosis later in life is to build strong bones during childhood and adolescence. Most females, will acquire 98% of their skeletal mass by age 20, so it’s vital to get plenty of calcium while you’re young.

Osteoporosis affects ten million people, 80% are women. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, 50% of women and 25% of men over age 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in their lifetime. One in five people with a hip fracture will end up in a nursing home within a year according to the Surgeon General. These statistics should prompt interest in preventing this silent disease.

One way to prevent osteoporosis is to eat foods high in calcium. Good sources are:

- **Milk** – whole, 2%, 1%, skim, buttermilk or chocolate. All provide around 300 mg of calcium in an 8 ounce glass. You can also purchase milk fortified with extra calcium. All milk products have Vitamin D added.
- **Cheese** – the amount of calcium varies depending on the type. Highest in calcium is ricotta (1/2 cup) and parmesan (1 oz. hard), both provide 336 mg. Swiss, provolone, Monterey, cheddar, and Muenster all have over 200 mg per ounce and are listed in descending order. Brick, Roquefort, mozzarella, blue, feta, and camembert have less.
- **Yogurt** – be sure to read the label as they vary greatly between manufacturers. Look for yogurts with Vitamin D added. Plain yogurt is the highest in calcium and void of added sugars.
- **Orange juice** with added calcium has as much calcium as a cup of milk.
- **Soy and rice beverages with added calcium**, depending on the brand, have 150-300 mg calcium in one cup. Be sure to check the label since these drinks do not naturally contain calcium like milk does and thus must be added by the manufacturer.
- **Frozen yogurt** which has 200 mg calcium in one cup.
- **Beverages made out of milk, yogurt, soy and rice drinks**. Try our recipes for mocha mud slide and strawberry banana smoothie.

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- **Vegetables** like collard greens, turnip greens, kale, okra and broccoli are good sources. Milligrams provided in one half cup of each - collards 180 mg, turnip greens 99 mg, kale 90 mg, broccoli 45 mg and okra 41 mg.
- **Canned salmon and sardines**, with edible bones are excellent sources

Vitamin D is required for calcium absorption and bone health. Your body can manufacture Vitamin D from exposure to the sun. Make a point of getting out in the sun daily for 5 to 15 minutes daily. During the winter months when sunlight is weak you can get your vitamin D from foods that have been fortified like milk and breakfast cereals and/or supplements.

You are never too old or too young to improve your bone health. For more information contact the National Osteoporosis Foundation at [www.nof.org](http://www.nof.org)

### MOCHA MUDSLIDE

1 cup skim milk  
2/3 cup sliced ripe banana  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 teaspoon instant coffee granules  
1 cup vanilla low-fat frozen yogurt  
Banana slices (optional)  
1-2 cups ice

Place all ingredients in a blender; process until slushy. Garnish with sliced banana, if desired. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings. Note: For a chocolate flavored shake, use reduced-fat chocolate milk instead of the plain skim milk, and reduce the sugar to 1/2 tablespoon. One serving provides 240mg calcium.

### SANTA FE GRANDE

4 cups skim milk  
1 (1 1/4 ounce) package taco seasoning mix  
1 tablespoon butter  
1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce  
1 cup quick-cooking grits OR quick-cooking polenta mix  
1 (4 1/2 ounce) can chopped green chilies  
1 1/4 cups shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese (5 ounces)  
2 tablespoons snipped fresh cilantro  
2 tablespoons chopped green onion  
1 cup salsa, taco sauce, reduced-fat dairy sour cream and/or chopped tomato

In a large saucepan combine milk, taco seasoning mix, butter and hot pepper sauce; cook over medium heat just until boiling. Gradually add grits or polenta mix, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring constantly, for 4 to 5 minutes or until mixture is very
thick. Remove from heat and stir in green chilies. Pour mixture into a greased 9x13-inch square baking dish. Cool slightly. Cover and chill in refrigerator 4 to 24 hours or until firm.

Uncover dish and invert onto a large cutting board. Cut grits mixture to make 16 triangles total. Arrange triangles in the same baking dish, overlapping as necessary. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake in a 400° oven about 25 minutes or until hot and cheese is melted. Let stand for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with cilantro and green onion. Serve with salsa, taco sauce, sour cream, and/or tomato. Makes 8 servings. One serving provides 286mg calcium.

**SPINACH AND PASTA ROLLS**

12 packaged dried lasagna noodles
2 1/4 cups skim milk
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 cup finely shredded Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon finely snipped fresh basil
1 (10 ounce) package frozen chopped spinach
1 beaten egg
1 1/4 cups ricotta cheese
3 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, softened
2 tablespoons thinly sliced green onion
Nonstick spray coating
Chopped tomatoes (optional)
Fresh herb (optional)

Cook lasagna noodles according to package directions. Drain; rinse with cold water; drain well. Set aside.

*For sauce*, in a medium saucepan combine skim milk, cornstarch, and nutmeg. Cook and stir over medium heat until bubbly. Cook and stir for 1 minute more. Remove from heat. Stir in Parmesan cheese and basil.

*For filling*, cook spinach according to package directions. Drain well, pressing out excess liquid with the back of a spoon. Stir together egg, ricotta cheese, cream cheese, and green onion. Add the spinach and 1/3 cup of the sauce; mix well. Set aside.

To assemble, spray a 3-quad rectangular baking dish with non-stick coating. Spread about 1/4 cup of the cheese mixture on a cooked noodle. Starting from a short end, roll up, jelly-roll style. Place pasta roll, seam side down, in prepared dish. Repeat with remaining noodles and cheese mixture. Pour remaining sauce over pasta rolls. Bake, uncovered, in a 350° oven for 35 to 40 minutes or until heated through. If desired, garnish with chopped tomato and fresh herb. Makes 6 servings. One serving provides 365 mg calcium.
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