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Functional Medicine

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Title

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THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY OF CALCIUM

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The good, the bad, and the ugly of calcium supplementation: a review of calcium intake on human health.

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Abstract

Calcium is an important integrative component of the human body and critical for human health. It has been well established that calcium intake is helpful in the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis, which has become one of the most serious public health problems across the world. However, community-dwelling adults with and without osteoporosis are rarely concerned or even not aware of the potential side effects of high or inappropriate doses of calcium intake. Some recent studies have revealed that excessive calcium intake might increase the risks of cardiovascular diseases. The purpose of this article was to review the health benefits, costs, and consequences of calcium supplementation on osteoporosis/osteoporotic fractures, cardiovascular events, kidney stones, gastrointestinal diseases, and other important diseases. In the end, we suggest that calcium supplementation should be prescribed and taken cautiously, accounting for individual patients' risks and benefits. Clearly, further studies are needed to examine the health effects of calcium supplementation to make any solid recommendations for people of different genders, ages, and ethnicities.

KEYWORDS: calcium; cardiovascular diseases; gastrointestinal diseases; kidney stones; osteoporosis; osteoporotic fractures

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