

Is My Body Absorbing My Calcium Supplement?

“The body easily absorbs most brand-name calcium products. If you aren’t sure about your product, you can find out how well it dissolves by placing it in a small amount of warm water for 30 minutes and stirring it occasionally. If it hasn’t dissolved within this time, it probably will not dissolve in your stomach. Chewable and liquid calcium supplements dissolve well because they are broken down before they enter the stomach.”¹

The body best absorbs calcium, whether from food or supplements, when it’s taken several times a day in amounts of not more than 500 mg, but taking it all at once is better than not taking it at all.

In many individuals, calcium supplements are better absorbed when taken with food.

- Calcium carbonate is absorbed best when taken with food.
- Calcium citrate can be taken anytime.¹

“Some people may have problems producing sufficient stomach acid or may be taking [medications](#) that suppress acid production. For them, a calcium citrate supplement might be better.”² Talk with your doctor about your supplement choice if you have a gastrointestinal disease³ or if you take proton pump inhibitors.⁴ And, remember, calcium alone does not protect your bones. Vitamin D is necessary for

calcium absorption – so make sure you are getting enough vitamin D, whether from sunlight, foods, or a supplement.

Sources

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2. Shaw, G (2010). Confused about calcium supplements? Experts share their advice about what to consider when choosing a calcium supplement [online]. Retrieved July 26, 2010. From <http://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/features/calcium-supplements-pills>.
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