



Over 60s put themselves at risk of bone fractures

Older Australians aged 60 and over are the worst age group at meeting the recommended daily calcium requirements, placing them at risk of poor bone health.

According to a Roy Morgan research study¹, only eight per cent of people 60 years and over are meeting the target of consuming three serves of dairy a day.

Consuming enough calcium-rich foods, whatever your age, is critical for reducing the risk of fractures in later life due to osteoporosis. Many fractures are a result of simple bumps and falls such as slipping, tripping or stumbling. In fact, according to a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australians over 65 years are being hospitalised at an increasing rate due to falls.

This year's **National Healthy Bones Week (2-8 August 2009)**, a joint initiative by Dairy Australia and Osteoporosis Australia, aims to highlight the important role of calcium-rich foods, such as dairy, in the maintenance of healthy bones and the prevention of osteoporosis.

To ensure that you are feeding your bones the recommended dietary intake of calcium, you can take the calcium challenge 'Calcium Cowculator' to test your daily levels. Visit the 'Calcium Cowculator' at www.healthybones.com.au and see how well you do!

In Australia, osteoporosis affects one in two females and one in three males over the age of 60.

According to Naseema Sparks, CEO of Osteoporosis Australia, the good news is that it's never too late to reduce the risk of osteoporosis and fractures.

"As our age increases, our calcium requirements increase. Women over 50 and men over 70 need more calcium with recommended daily intakes rising to 1,300 mg per day" Ms Sparks said.

Dairy Australia Dietitian, Glenys Kerrins, recommends that as well as at least three serves of dairy foods a day, a good way to boost intake is to choose at least one serve as a fortified dairy product, such as milk with extra calcium added.

"Dairy products are the biggest contributor of calcium in the Australian diet and provide a whole package of bone-building nutrients including protein, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium and zinc," she said.

Ms Kerrins said that protein-rich foods, such as dairy, also helped retain muscle mass and strength which reduces the risk of falls.

¹ 2007, 'Dairy Usage & Attitude Study' conducted by Roy Morgan Research

'Are You Feeding Your Bones?' is the theme of this year's **National Healthy Bones Week**.

For more information, visit www.healthybones.com.au.