How Vitamins and Minerals Affect Your Teeth | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/how-vitamins-and-minerals-affect-your-teeth/

Details:

Vitamins and minerals support healthy teeth and gums when you get them through a balanced diet or, where a doctor advises, supplements. Calcium and phosphorus help strengthen enamel, the hard outer layer of the tooth. Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium, and vitamin C supports healthy gums and soft tissues. At Core Dental we suggest speaking to your doctor or dentist before starting supplements or making big changes to your diet, because needs differ from person to person.

Which mineral helps strengthen tooth enamel?

Calcium is essential for strengthening teeth and bones, and it helps strengthen enamel, which protects teeth against the acids that cause decay. Dairy foods such as milk, cheese and yoghurt are common sources. Plant-based sources include leafy green vegetables, tofu and soybeans.

What does phosphorus do for your teeth?

Phosphorus works together with calcium to keep teeth healthy and strong. It is found in seafood, eggs, meat and poultry. Vegan and vegetarian sources include soybeans, lentils and nuts such as almonds.

Why is vitamin D important for your teeth?

Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium, so it supports the bones and teeth that calcium helps to protect. If you are low in vitamin D, calcium may not work as effectively. Your body makes vitamin D naturally through sun exposure, and dietary sources include mushrooms, fatty fish such as salmon and tuna, and some fortified milks and cereals.

How does vitamin C help your gums?

Vitamin C is important for the health of your gums and the soft tissues of your mouth. It helps with healing and with building and repairing connective tissue, and it plays a part in keeping inflammation down. Citrus fruits, potatoes and leafy green vegetables are common sources.

When should you take vitamin or mineral supplements?

Before you start any vitamin supplement or make a drastic change to your diet, speak to your doctor first. Vitamins and minerals are good for the body, but taking too much or taking them incorrectly can cause problems. Some vitamins and minerals can also interact with prescription medicines. Your doctor or dentist can help you find a balance that supports your oral health.

How can you plan your care with our team?

A useful first step is to tell us about your concern, any symptoms and your goals when you book. Bring relevant medical information and a current list of medicines. Our team can then check your teeth, gums, bite and surrounding tissues, take imaging when it is clinically appropriate and explain which options suit you.

It is reasonable to ask what the recommended approach is meant to achieve, whether there are alternatives, and what preparation, aftercare and risks are involved. Time, fees and maintenance vary with each person's diagnosis, and a written treatment plan helps you compare stages and payment arrangements before you go ahead.

Call 000 immediately for uncontrollable bleeding, difficulty breathing or swallowing, a serious facial injury or other life-threatening symptoms. For severe tooth pain or swelling without these emergency signs, contact your dental practice promptly.

Further detail from Core Dental

The following points are drawn from Core Dental's own published material on this topic. They are included here for completeness, and anything that applies to your own treatment should be confirmed with your clinician.

The correct intake of vitamins and minerals, either through diet or supplements, has a beneficial impact on our overall well-being. In order to get the most out of your calcium intake, it is important to ensure you are getting enough Vitamin D. Vitamin A plays a role in maintaining the mucous membrane inside of your mouth, which is the protective layer coating your gums and cheeks.

Calcium: what the published advice actually claims

Vitamin and mineral pages tend to overreach, so it is worth being precise about what the state health advice says calcium does — and about the two places it says the opposite of what supplement marketing implies.

What it claims. The Victorian Department of Health: "Calcium is vital for healthy teeth and bones." Among the roles it lists for calcium in the body, the first is "strengthening bones and teeth". It also gives a sense of scale: "The average adult's weight is made up of about 2% calcium. Most of this is found in the skeleton and teeth - the rest is stored in the tissues or blood."

What it does not claim. Nothing on that page says a calcium supplement strengthens an existing tooth, repairs enamel, or prevents decay. Those are separate claims, and we are not going to make them on its authority. Decay prevention, in the Department's own dental advice, runs through diet frequency, fluoride, brushing, cleaning between teeth and saliva — not through mineral intake.

Food first, and the Department is unambiguous. "It is much better to get calcium from foods (which also provide other nutrients) than from calcium supplements." On going beyond the label: "If you do take calcium supplements, make sure you don't take more than the amount recommended on the bottle. Too much calcium may cause gastrointestinal upsets such as bloating, constipation and, rarely, other complications such as kidney stones."

It also records that the question is not closed: "Safety of calcium supplementation has often been debated. High levels have been potentially linked to heart disease." Alongside that it states where supplementation has support: "calcium supplementation at levels of 500 to 600 mg/day is both safe and effective for reducing the risk fractures in people who don't get enough calcium from their diet." For people who do get enough from food, that is not an argument for taking more.

Who the Department says needs more. "People at different life stages need different amounts of calcium - young children, teenagers and women over 50 all have greater than average requirements." Its daily intake figures include 500 mg for children 1-3 years, 700 mg for children 4-8, 1,000 mg for children 9-11, 1,300 mg for adolescents 12-18, 1,000 mg for men 19-70 and women 19-50, and 1,300

mg for women 51-70 and for adults over 70.

On pregnancy, it heads off a common assumption: "A developing baby needs a lot of calcium. However, there is no need for women to take additional dietary calcium during pregnancy because pregnant women absorb calcium from food more efficiently." And: "Breastfeeding women do not need to increase their calcium intake, unless they are adolescents."

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Calcium, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 November 2025). Accessed 6 November 2026.

Absorption, not just intake — and the dental catch

Two things complicate "eat more calcium". The first is that what you swallow is not what you absorb. The second is that several of the foods and drinks richest in minerals are also acidic, which puts them on a different list entirely.

Absorption varies enormously between foods. The Department's own comparison makes the point better than any general rule: "One cup of cooked spinach contains 80 mg, although only 5% of this may be absorbed. This is due to the high concentration of oxalate, a compound in spinach that reduces calcium absorption. By contrast, one cup of cooked broccoli contains about 50 mg of calcium, but the absorption from broccoli is much higher at around 50-60%."

Less calcium, far more of it absorbed. Leafy greens are not interchangeable.

Its other serve figures , for comparison: "One cup of milk, a 200 g tub of yoghurt or one cup of calcium-fortified soy milk provides around 300 mg calcium." "One cup, or 260 g of tofu contains around 832 mg of calcium." "Half a cup of canned salmon contains 310 mg of calcium." "Fifteen almonds contain about 40 mg of calcium." And a label warning for anyone switching milks: "Plant-based milks (oat, almond, rice, etc.) may or may not be calcium-fortified, so it is important to check the label of these products if you intend to use these in place of regular dairy milk to boost your calcium intake."

What blocks absorption. "Factors impacting calcium absorption include low vitamin D levels, large amounts of caffeine/alcohol consumption and some medical conditions (such as coeliac or kidney disease)." Among lifestyle factors that lower bone density the Department lists a "high-salt diet", "more than 4 drinks per day of caffeine-containing drinks", "excessive alcohol intake", "very low body weight", low levels of weight-bearing activity, "low levels of vitamin D

people who are housebound or cover their bodies completely when they are outside are at increased risk", and smoking.

Now the dental catch, which nutrition advice does not cover. Several mineral-rich or vitamin-rich choices are acidic, and acid harms teeth whether or not the drink is nutritious. The Department's list of high-acid foods and drinks includes "citrus fruits (lemons, limes, oranges)", "fruit juices", "vitamin waters" and "vitamin C tablets". Two of its instructions are specifically about supplements and fortified drinks: "Do not chew vitamin C tablets. If necessary, take vitamin C supplements that are swallowed whole", and "avoid adding lemon, lime or citrus to water".

Fortified orange juice is a good illustration: the Department records that "half a cup of calcium-fortified orange juice (100 ml) contains up to 80 mg of calcium", and separately lists fruit juices among the acidic drinks to limit. Both are true at once. Its own preference for getting fruit's benefit is clear elsewhere: "Eat fruit rather than drinking fruit juice", and "eat fruit at meal times rather than between meals."

Where dairy earns a second mention. Beyond its calcium, the Department gives dairy a direct dental role twice. After sweet or acidic food: "Have a piece of cheese after eating sweet or acidic foods as dairy foods assist in repairing damage by decay-causing bacteria." And among the ways to neutralise acid after an exposure: "consuming dairy products, such as unsweetened milk and cheese". Unsweetened is the operative word.

And the honest summary. A diet with enough calcium supports teeth and bones, in the Department's words "vital" to both. It is not a treatment for a tooth that is already damaged, and the Department's

route for any supplement question is a clinician rather than a shelf: "Before taking supplements, it's best to discuss this with your doctor or other registered healthcare professional."

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Calcium, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 November 2025); Dental erosion, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 22 October 2025); Teeth and mouth care, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 25 July 2025). All accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Can vitamins and minerals repair damaged teeth?

Nutrients help keep enamel, gums and soft tissues healthy, but they do not replace dental care. Decay and gum disease still need to be assessed by a dentist. Good nutrition works alongside brushing, cleaning between your teeth and regular check-ups, and results vary from person to person.

Do I need a supplement if I eat a balanced diet?

Many people can meet their needs through food, but this depends on your diet, health and circumstances. Please speak to your doctor before starting a supplement. Your dentist can also talk to you about how your diet may affect your teeth and gums.

Is more calcium always better for my teeth?

No. Taking too much of a vitamin or mineral can have negative effects, and some can interact with medicines. Check with your doctor before taking supplements, and ask us if you would like to talk about how your diet relates to your oral health.

What foods support healthy gums?

Foods that provide vitamin C, such as citrus fruits, potatoes and leafy green vegetables, support the gums and soft tissues. A varied diet combined with daily brushing and cleaning between your teeth supports gum health, and your dentist can check your gums at each visit.

How can I tell if my diet is affecting my teeth?

Signs such as sensitivity, bleeding gums or new decay can have several causes, so they are worth having checked. Your dentist can examine your teeth and gums and talk through your diet and habits with you.

Will a calcium supplement strengthen my teeth?

Nothing in the published state health advice says so. The Victorian Department of Health states that "calcium is vital for healthy teeth and bones" and lists "strengthening bones and teeth" among calcium's roles in the body — but its calcium page makes no claim that a supplement repairs enamel or prevents decay, and we are not going to make one on its behalf. Its own decay prevention advice runs through diet frequency, fluoride, brushing, cleaning between teeth and saliva.

Is it better to get calcium from food or supplements?

Food. "It is much better to get calcium from foods (which also provide other nutrients) than from calcium supplements." Before taking any supplement, the Department's advice is to "discuss this with your doctor or other registered healthcare professional".

Can you take too much calcium?

Yes. "If you do take calcium supplements, make sure you don't take more than the amount recommended on the bottle. Too much calcium may cause gastrointestinal upsets such as bloating, constipation and, rarely, other complications such as kidney stones." The Department also notes that "safety of calcium supplementation has often been debated" and that "high levels have been potentially linked to heart disease".

How much calcium should I be getting?

The Department's daily figures vary by age: 500 mg for children 1-3, 700 mg for children 4-8, 1,000 mg for children 9-11, 1,300 mg for adolescents 12-18, 1,000 mg for men 19-70 and women 19-50, and 1,300 mg for women 51-70 and adults over 70.

Do I need more calcium while pregnant?

The Department says not: "There is no need for women to take additional dietary calcium during pregnancy because pregnant women absorb calcium from food more efficiently." Breastfeeding women "do not need to increase their calcium intake, unless they are adolescents".

Is spinach a good source of calcium?

Less useful than it looks. "One cup of cooked spinach contains 80 mg, although only 5% of this may be absorbed", because of oxalate. By comparison "one cup of cooked broccoli contains about 50 mg of calcium, but the absorption from broccoli is much higher at around 50-60%".

Does plant-based milk have calcium in it?

Only if it has been fortified. "Plant-based milks (oat, almond, rice, etc.) may or may not be calcium-fortified, so it is important to check the label of these products if you intend to use these in place of regular dairy milk to boost your calcium intake." A fortified cup provides around 300 mg.

Is fortified fruit juice a good way to get calcium for my teeth?

It is a mixed choice. The Department records that "half a cup of calcium-fortified orange juice (100 ml) contains up to 80 mg of calcium", and separately lists fruit juices among acidic drinks to limit. Its own preference is to "eat fruit rather than drinking fruit juice", and to "eat fruit at meal times rather than between meals".

Are chewable vitamin C tablets bad for teeth?

The Department asks you not to chew them: "Do not chew vitamin C tablets. If necessary, take vitamin C supplements that are swallowed whole." Vitamin C tablets and vitamin waters both appear on its list of high-acid items.

Is there a food that helps teeth directly?

Dairy gets two direct mentions in the dental advice. "Have a piece of cheese after eating sweet or acidic foods as dairy foods assist in repairing damage by decay-causing bacteria", and among ways to neutralise acid after an exposure, "consuming dairy products, such as unsweetened milk and cheese".

What else weakens bone, aside from low calcium?

The Department's list includes a high-salt diet, "more than 4 drinks per day of caffeine-containing drinks", excessive alcohol, very low body weight, low levels of weight-bearing and resistance exercise, low vitamin D — noting that "people who are housebound or cover their bodies completely when they are outside are at increased risk" — and smoking.

Related services and further reading

General dentistry

Dental check-ups

Dental hygiene

5 tips for a healthier smile

How to keep your gums healthy

4 things to avoid if you have sensitive teeth

What is fluoride and what is it used for?

Brushing teeth: are you doing it right?

Healthy snacks to help prevent tooth decay in children

How can we help?

If you would like to talk about your diet and your teeth, our team can help at any of our nine Core Dental clinics. Call 13 13 16 or book online, and we will arrange an examination so your dentist can talk through your options. You can also read about what to expect at your first Core Dental appointment .

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed

Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

This article is general in nature and does not replace advice from a registered dental practitioner who has examined you. Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

Which nutrients does Core Dental talk about for tooth health?

In our patient information at Core Dental we explain how calcium, phosphorus, vitamin D and vitamin C relate to teeth and gums. Calcium and phosphorus support enamel, vitamin D helps calcium absorption and vitamin C supports gum and soft tissue health.

What does calcium do for tooth enamel?

Calcium helps strengthen enamel, the hard outer layer of the tooth, and protects teeth against the acids that cause decay. Dairy foods, leafy green vegetables, tofu and soybeans are common sources, and our dentists can discuss diet with you.

Where does the body get vitamin D?

The body produces vitamin D through sunlight exposure. Dietary sources include mushrooms, fatty fish such as salmon and tuna, and some fortified milks and cereals. Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium for bones and teeth.

Which foods contain phosphorus for healthy teeth?

Phosphorus is found in seafood, eggs, meat and poultry, and in vegan sources such as soybeans, lentils and almonds. It works with calcium to keep teeth strong. Our team at Core Dental can talk through diet during your visit.

Should I speak to someone before taking vitamin supplements?

Yes. We recommend you speak to your doctor first, because incorrect or excessive intake can have negative effects and some vitamins interact with prescription medicines. Your Core Dental dentist can also talk with you about your oral health.

How many Core Dental clinics are there?

Core Dental has nine clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie. Call 13 13 16 or book online to find the clinic nearest you.

When are Core Dental clinics open?

Our clinics are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings, and closed on Sunday. Saturday hours finish at 1.30pm, and Bayside opens at 8.30am on Saturdays. Call 13 13 16 to confirm your clinic.