

How much Calcium is essential in Pregnancy? Are the supplements suggested?

In pregnancy, starting from the 2nd trimester it's important to supplement your diet with calcium of 1000 mg per day. This is important for numerous reasons for the mother and the developing baby in the womb. The additional calcium that is to be taken has to be from natural sources and has to be organic. Calcium is important as a supplement because of the following reasons:

- For Calcification of fetal bones and teeth.
- It also helps in protection of calcium resources of mother to meet the needs during lactation.
- During pregnancy 80% of fetal skeleton is built up by mother's diet and the rest 20% by maternal reserves.
- Optimum level of calcium and Vitamin D reduces muscular cramps in pregnant mother.
- Intrauterine nutrition is important for the growth of CNS and Kidneys of fetus.



The rich sources of calcium include: Milk, Cheese, Yoghurt, Spinach, Ragi. It should be noted that every half a litre of milk includes 600 mg of calcium. This contributes to almost 50% of the requisite requirement. Hence by just drinking two glasses of milk an expecting mother can fulfill her calcium needs.

The Benefits of Vitamin D are:

- Enhances the maternal calcium absorption
- Maternal deficiency results in neonatal hypocalcaemia
- Excess results in atherosclerosis, hyper calcemia, Calcium deposits in vital organs, mental retardation.

The Rich Sources of vitamin D are:

- Fortified Milk/ Dairy Products/ Cereals and Bread/ Egg yolks

If you have a history of calcium deficiency, it is best that you consult your treating doctor/gynecologist for further advice. A nutrition expert shall also be able to recommend the right nutritional plan for you.