

# Creating Health & Nutrition Fact Sheets

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for the StrongWomen™ Program

**C**alcium is needed for strong bones. However, other vitamins and minerals are also necessary for calcium to be used effectively by our bodies.

## Vitamin D

This vitamin is so important that it is added to many calcium-rich foods and supplements to allow calcium to be absorbed. The best food sources of vitamin D are egg yolks and some fish. Our skin also creates vitamin D when exposed to sunlight. It only takes 20 minutes of sunlight each day. Deficiencies can occur in the winter when days are short and winter clothing covers

## Other Nutrients That Contribute to Bone Health

most of our skin. People with dark skin create less vitamin D. Seniors may also be at risk if outdoor time is limited.

## Phosphorus

This mineral is also found in the bone structure. It is more easily absorbed than calcium. Phosphorus is found in many foods we eat, and people are rarely deficient. Some good sources are dairy foods, liver, and sunflower seeds.

## Magnesium

This is another mineral important for bone structure. Magnesium is found in green leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds, bananas, and grain foods. Deficiencies are rare but do occur in alcoholics and those with kidney disease.

## Vitamins K and C

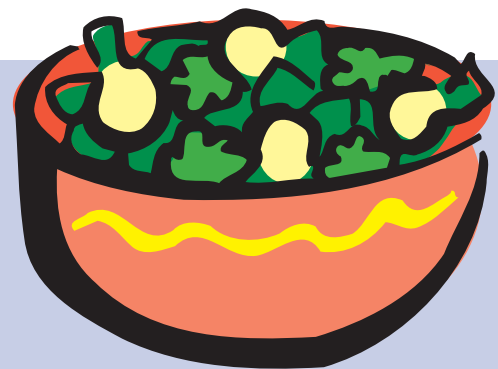
These are important for collagen production, the first step in bone formation. Vitamin K is also involved in building

cartilage and connective tissues. Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that fights aging factors, including bone depletion. Vitamin K is found significantly in liver and green leafy vegetables. Citrus fruits, kiwis, and cabbage are good sources of Vitamin C.

**Warning:** Vitamin A is needed for many body functions, but too much can contribute to osteoporosis. Vitamin A is found in eggs, the fat in dairy foods, and green and orange fruits and vegetables. If you eat these foods, don't supplement vitamin A with a multivitamin, fish oil, or single supplement providing more than 100 percent the RDA (700 micrograms for women).

## Shopping Tips

Calcium-rich foods with added vitamin D are the best choice for good absorption by the body. Choose a variety of foods to get the other important vitamins and minerals in your meals. Spinach, oranges, and dairy foods are good sources of vitamins and minerals important for bone health.



## Examine Your Choices

Food	Source	What I buy	What I plan to buy/change
<i>Example:</i> Salad greens	Vitamin K and magnesium	Iceberg lettuce	Spinach and romaine lettuce

**My Goal:**

***Mandarin Orange Spinach Salad***  
 Serving Size: 1 ½ cup

**Ingredients**  
 12 cups fresh spinach, washed well  
 6 large fresh mushrooms  
 1 red onion, sliced into rings  
 1 small can of mandarin oranges  
 1/3 cup slivered almonds, toasted

**Dressing**  
 ½ cup vegetable oil  
 ½ cup cider vinegar  
 ½ cup red wine vinegar  
 Tarragon leaves, 2 tsp fresh or ½ tsp if dried  
 Reserved juice from mandarin oranges  
 ¼ cup feta cheese  
 Salt to taste

**Directions**  
 Tear spinach leaves into bite-sized pieces, removing stems. Slice mushrooms after washing and removing soiled end from stem. Drain mandarin oranges, reserving juice. Mix dressing ingredients and shake well to blend. Toss with spinach, mushrooms, onion rings and oranges just before serving. Garnish with almonds.  
 Serves 8.

**Nutrition Information**  
 203 calories, 161 calories from fat, 90 mg sodium, 7.3 g carbohydrates, 2.3 g fiber, 4.1 g protein, vitamin A 89%, calcium 9%, vitamin C 42%, iron 10%

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Sources: Grosvenor, Mary, and Lori Smolin. *Nutrition, Everyday Choices*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons, 2006.

*Calcium Rich Eating, Lesson 4*, by J. Lynne Brown, Penn State Cooperative Extension.

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