

Is Calcium supplementation really bad?

by [Gerald Lewis](#) on Monday, August 2, 2010 at 10:16am

Calcium supplementation and heart disease and stroke.

A recent paper with authors coming from Auckland New Zealand published in the British Medical Journal (29 July 2010) has reviewed the literature on patients taking oral calcium supplementation. They have come to the conclusion that calcium supplements increased the risk of a heart attack and stroke, leaving those taking these supplements for bone and other protection uncertain what they should be doing.

A meta-analysis simply reviews previous studies, eliminating those which do not fulfill the criteria of the authors and analyzing them all. In this study there were 190 possible papers, and of these only fifteen were included. Of these 15 papers, only 65% had data on cardiovascular events, and it is hard to see why they were included. In this selected group of patients there was in fact a higher incidence of heart disease and strokes.

However this study deliberately excluded any papers where vitamin D was given in addition to calcium. The reason being that other studies had shown that calcium and vitamin D has no adverse effect on heart disease, and could possibly be beneficial.

Thus this paper has no relevance at all to people taking supplemental calcium plus vitamin D and/or magnesium. People taking supplements [for example the USANA Active Calcium plus] which include vitamin D do not need to be concerned as this study does not apply to them..

There is no study showing that people taking calcium supplements plus some vitamin D has any adverse effect on the heart or strokes, and the authors of this study agree with this statement. In addition there are studies [the Women's Health Initiative] which showed that calcium and vitamin D do not increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Therefore people taking this combination may continue to do so in confidence that there is no evidence that it is anything other than beneficial.

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1 August 2010