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Osteoporosis Health Center

Calcium-Packed Carrots in the Works

Scientists Make Genetically Modified Carrots to Boost Calcium for Carrot Eaters

By [Miranda Hitti](#)

WebMD Medical News

Reviewed by [Louise Chang, MD](#)

Jan. 14, 2008 -- The carrots of tomorrow may pack more calcium, thanks to genetic engineering.

Normal carrots don't contain much calcium. By tweaking a carrot gene, scientists at Texas A & M University and Baylor College of Medicine have developed calcium-rich carrots.

In an experiment, 30 adults ate the genetically modified carrots one day and normal carrots another day. Both types of carrots contained a tracer chemical that tracked calcium absorption.

Participants absorbed 41% more calcium from the genetically modified carrots than from the normal carrots. That calcium may boost calcium consumption, helping to protect bones from [osteoporosis](#), but the calcium-rich carrots aren't ready for prime time.

"These carrots were grown in carefully monitored and controlled environments," Baylor's Kendal Hirschi, PhD, states in a news release. "Much more research needs to be conducted before this would be available to consumers."

Meanwhile, you can get calcium from plenty of other [foods](#) (including dairy products, leafy green veggies, and fortified foods) and from [supplements](#). And don't forget about [weight-bearing exercise](#) if you're trying to prevent or treat osteoporosis.

The study appears in this week's online early edition of *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

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