



MEDIA RELEASE
31 July 2010

Calcium and Heart Attack Risk

Natural Products New Zealand advises people to check the facts and look into the detail behind the alarmist media headlines that calcium supplements may increase the risk of heart attack by up to 30%.

Michelle Palmer, Executive Director of Natural Products New Zealand says that the study was limited in its scope and only investigated a particular group of calcium takers; to interpret the results as a recommendation for the general population is completely erroneous.

“The study only dealt with people over the age of 70 and you would have to question whether this age group were more highly disposed to the risk of a heart attack, whether taking calcium or not. The majority of people in New Zealand who are taking calcium supplements are not in the age group this study investigated, and are using calcium to strengthen bones and maintain bone density.

“Reports on the study also did not share that the study group of over 70 year olds were taking calcium without the recommended addition of Vitamin D.

“There is no evidence to suggest that taking calcium supplements under the age of 70 is in any way harmful and we would strongly recommend the people who are at risk of calcium deficiency, continue with their supplements but ensure they are also taking Vitamin D.”

These groups include pregnant and breast feeding women as well as menopausal women who may have an inadequate intake of calcium and Vitamin D which can lead to lower bone density and brittle bones.

The way this study has been reported could result in people who should be supplementing their diet with calcium, stopping taking their calcium to the detriment of their health. Anyone who is concerned about this should consult with their medical practitioner.

-ENDS-

Note: Natural Products New Zealand (NPNZ) represents over 80% of the Natural Products industry. Based on a survey of wholesale and retail sales information, export data and industry surveys, NPNZ's members make up the overwhelming majority of the natural products industry in terms of product lines, turnover, employment and exports.

For more information contact:
Michelle Palmer, Executive Director of Natural Products New Zealand
P: +64 3 577 8676 M: 021 874 500