The most misunderstood Natural Gender Selection supplement - why increasing your calcium intake can actually increase your chances for having a boy.

Apologies in advance for rocking the boat, but we really want people to get their desired gender. We must be willing to take a hard look at even the most universally accepted ideas behind gender ratio if we want to unravel the mysteries of Natural Gender Selection.

The conventional swaying wisdom has been to take high levels of calcium to sway pink. In fact, the French Gender Diet (FGD) claims a staggering 80% success rate from diet and supplements alone. This has never felt 100% right to us because we have many women over the years consume a lot of dairy and have all boys. After seeing so many Natural Gender Selection sites recommending large doses of calcium and magnesium for a girl, and potassium and sodium for a boy only to end up with a failed attempt after attempt we began to really question this methodology.

Firstly, there are entire cultures that eat lots of dairy/very little dairy and everything in between, and yet the rates of boys to girls worldwide stays right around 50-50, with always a few more boys born than girls. If a high-calcium, magnesium, Vitamin D, low sodium/potassium diet was a magic bullet for conceiving girls (or even had 80% success rate), shouldn't we see at least a slight variation in gender ratio between a culture where dairy foods are rarely eaten (should have at least SOME more boys than statistically expected), and one in which they are a staple (should have at least SOME more girls than statistically expected), even if the ratio never shifted from around 50-50. In fact, the opposite is actually true. Scandinavia, where dairy foods are a staple, has one of the highest boy to girl ratio of anywhere on the planet, with 106-108 boys born for every 100 girls.

Secondly, humanity didn't even begin to evolve the ability to digest dairy products until 8000 years ago. Until that point, no human adults were physically capable of digesting the lactose in dairy foods. We had not even domesticated animals much prior to that, and it's mighty difficult to milk a wooly mammoth even if you could digest their milk. Lactose actually aids in calcium absorption, so even if they were getting calcium through other foods, it was more difficult to absorb than the calcium in dairy. Yet, both males and females were being born throughout antiquity - if they hadn't been, the human race would have died out long ago.

Only within the last 100 years did we even begin to have the refrigeration capability to store dairy year round anyway. Even among people who could digest lactose, until quite recently, milk was not the dietary staple it is nowadays. Once the cow stopped giving milk, that was it for the year - folks couldn't just run to the corner store to pick up a gallon of milk. High-
sodium cheese (forbidden on the FGD) was much more likely to be eaten than milk and even that was eaten sparingly.

Yogurt was an anomaly in many cultures until the 1970’s – our great-grandmothers, who gave birth to several daughters, never tasted it in their lives. You youngsters may not believe this but I actually remember the first time I tasted yogurt and I am only 40 years old. My mom bought it at a health food store because it was so unusual that the grocery store didn’t carry it!!!

Another point to consider is that most of the world is STILL unable to digest milk products. According to Wikipedia, 75% of ALL adults worldwide are unable to digest lactose to a greater or lesser extent. 90% of people of African and Asian descent are unable to digest dairy foods, as are a significant number of Hispanic and Native American people. Yet there is very little variation in the gender ratio…it still hovers right around 50-50 regardless of ethnicity. In fact, studies have found that people living around the equator, who tend to be of African, Asian, and Hispanic heritage and therefore largely incapable of digesting dairy, actually have MORE daughters than people who live in colder climates, many of whom have dairy as a dietary staple.

The FGD claims it is the ratio of calcium to sodium that matters, and so some have suggested that perhaps in some of these cultures, they eat so little sodium that even though they eat little calcium, the ratio of calcium to sodium is still high and that’s why they have more daughters. That is completely unsubstantiated by the facts. In fact, people of African descent actually have a gene that causes them to retain high levels of sodium in their bodies, as a defense against dehydration and malaria. So not only are most people of African descent genetically incapable of eating dairy foods, they also have higher levels of sodium in their blood than people of Northern European descent, who eat the most dairy, do. They also eat more fresh fruits and vegetables year round and get more potassium than many in Western countries do, (as do Asians and some Hispanic countries). Their cuisines are based around fruits and vegetables and whole grains, all very rich in potassium. Yet the gender ratio in most African countries (and among African Americans as well) is much lower than the countries that eat the most dairy.

It has also been suggested that this paradox can be explained by increases in Vitamin D intake - people who live around the equator may absorb more Vitamin D through sunlight (humans manufacture Vitamin D from sunlight), and therefore are able to absorb more calcium than people in more northern climates. However, dairy products in the United States, Canada, and many European countries are fortified with Vitamin D, but they are STILL having more boys despite this.

At the same time, people with darker skins (in equatorial countries where more girls are being born) actually have some trouble absorbing Vitamin D, despite living in a sunnier environment. Rickets is a big problem in Asia and Middle Eastern countries and parts of Africa, and many Middle Eastern women are severely Vitamin D deficient because they are never exposed to sunlight due to their clothing. They may not even be getting much Vitamin D, and therefore absorbable calcium, regardless of where they live. Shouldn't they be having way more sons??
Some intriguing studies have been published recently, stating that slightly more baby girls were conceived Feb-May and slightly more baby boys were conceived in October. These studies were done in Italy, where Vitamin D levels would be lowest in Feb-May and highest in late fall (after a summer spent storing up Vitamin D) when the most boys were conceived.

Since Vitamin D controls calcium absorption, this seems to indicate that more girls were conceived during a time period of lowest calcium absorption, and more boys were conceived during a period of highest calcium absorption. In Italy, between 20-50% of all adults (70% of Sicilians) are lactose intolerant so it is unlikely that they were simply drinking lots of milk. Cheese is a large part of the Italian diet, but most cheese is not Vit. D fortified, and my understanding is that they don't traditionally eat much yogurt there either.

If calcium really was of critical importance in conceiving girls, wouldn't we expect the exact opposite to occur? As Vitamin D levels went up in summer, wouldn't more calcium be absorbed and more girls be conceived and as they dropped in the winter, wouldn't calcium levels drop and more boys be conceived?

According to the Trivers Willard hypothesis, high intake of nutrients sways blue, not pink, and it just seems highly unlikely that calcium would be the one exception to that. The findings of a study that tracked maternal nutrient intake, found that more nutrients across the board, including calcium = more boys conceived.

High fertility seems to equal more sons and full-fat dairy is supposed to help raise overall fertility. Full-fat dairy products are also very high in fat and protein and since evidence indicates we should shrink our muscle mass to lower our testosterone levels, the less protein and fat we eat, the better.

We are not saying that calcium doesn't have some role to play, but just want everyone to be aware that we don't fully understand what mechanisms are at play, and that calcium is NOT a magic bullet. No one should rely on a high calcium diet ALONE to sway - the science may not support it.

1) TTC Pink swayers - Eating your normal diet and just taking cal-mag-Vit. D supps WILL NOT WORK. We have seen several people do exactly this on other sites - heck, I kinda did it myself - and NONE of them ever got a baby girl from it. Even when they "cut back" on salt they had opposites. (to my mind, this is further proof that it is the DIETS that are swaying and NOT the minerals, because when the diet is removed from the equation, the minerals do not seem to sway in any reliable way. If the minerals are swaying, they should sway at least SOMEWHAT for people even if they're not following the diet.)

2) TTC Pink swayers - Drinking unlimited amounts of milk and eating unlimited amounts of "approved" foods on the FGD is another major no-no. People are drinking GALLONS of milk and eating tahini/yogurt by the barrel and including chicken/fish/eggs, and they are getting opposites. Both the FGD and IG diets limit dairy/produce/meats to what the allotted minerals are for that day. If you want to do the FGD or IG diets, REALLY do them and stick to the guidelines for minerals. You will find that it's not a lot of food and it actually
resembles the Low-Everything diet pretty closely, even more restrictive in some ways. If you toss in skipping breakfast and lose a few pounds, even better.

3) TTC Blue swayers - Eating your normal diet and just trying to eat more salt doesn’t cut the mustard for blue. Please also increase calories, protein, fat, and nutrients across the board, do not skip breakfast, add some muscle mass, and keep your blood sugar high. Eat protein and carbs at every meal and don’t rely on salt alone to sway. Not only that, but an overly high intake of salt over the course of months may even be bad for your health and fertility and might make you more girl friendly than you would have been even had you done nothing at all to sway. One rat study found that high sodium intake caused rats to conceive more GIRLS, not boys.

4) TTC Blue Swayers - Eliminating calcium completely, esp. over the course of several months is not a good idea. Cutting out an entire class of foods and one of the most important nutrients in your body, is not going to send a message to your body that times are good, period. Furthermore, eating full-fat dairy has been proven to enhance fertility and everything that raises fertility sways blue. (One rat study found that potassium plus calcium caused nearly as many males to be conceived as high potassium intake alone and the link is somewhere on this thread.)

TTC Blue swayers are lucky in that even if you eliminate dietary calcium all together, your body still has an ample supply in your bones. On the FGD, when you drastically reduce calcium, your body starts stealing it from your bones and keeps a perfectly adequate level of calcium in your blood (otherwise you would DIE from the FGD), so it is extremely unlikely that the FGD even sways by altering the levels of calcium in your blood. You have some time, perhaps months, before you really do start to do harm to yourself and your fertility. But over time, it is going to take a toll on you, both in terms of fertility and in terms of your long term health and the longer it takes you to get pg, you may end up ruining your sway by running low on critical nutrients. If you choose to do the FGD, please don’t tinker around with TBM, timing, etc and just hurry up and get pregnant as quickly as you can.

Since pretty much everything that seems to lower fertility seems to sway pink, and everything that increases fertility seems to sway blue, it doesn't seem unreasonable to assume for now, that perhaps there's some interplay between fat and calcium intake. Maybe calcium without fat somehow interferes with fertility. Perhaps it's as simple as, a high calcium/low fat intake = more girls conceived, and high calcium/high fat intake = more boys conceived. Adding some full fat dairy to a blue sway may very well be a good idea.

We can’t know until more research is done, if any or none of these things have any effect on gender ratio whatsoever. But, we do need to eat SOMETHING when we are swaying (heaven knows the pink sway is restrictive enough as it is!). Certainly low-fat dairy in moderation can be a good addition to a pink sway in addition to other sway aspects. But no one should rely on high calcium/magnesium/Vitamin D intake alone, if you're trying to conceive a daughter.

Calcium needs to be removed from magic bullet status, but that doesn't mean that it cannot be a part of an excellent pink sway.
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