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DAORONG KHUNAWUTIKUNAKORN : AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CALCIUM AND CONSUMPTION OF CALCIUM CONTAINING FOODS AMONG SECONDARY STUDENTS , SURASAKMONTRI SCHOOL. THESIS ADVISOR : REWADEE CHONGSUWUT , M.S., Ph.D., CHUTIMA SIRIKULCHAYANON , M.D., M.P.H.M. , WONGDYAN PANDII , Ph.D. 124 p. ISBN 974-665-034-3

Calcium is an essential mineral for building bones and contributing to bone building activity during childhood. This study was research to study of the awareness of the importance of calcium and consumption of calcium containing foods among students. The participants consisted of 360 , both male and female students , attending seventh through ninth grades of Surasakmontri School in Huaykwang of Bangkok metropolis. Questionnaires concerning demographic information , perception of the importance of calcium , attitude of the importance of calcium , awareness of the importance of calcium and consumption of calcium containing foods were used to collect the data.

Results showed that the majority of students had a high level of awareness of the importance of calcium. Consumption of calcium containing foods was at a low level. Milk and milk products were the most frequently consumed food groups including unsweetened milk , sweetened milk , Yoghurt , Yakult and ice cream. Meat and meat products were the second most frequently consumed food group including eggs , fish balls and shrimp. Vitamilk (soymilk) and chocolate were frequently consumed. Vegetables were consumed at the lowest level. Additionally , perception of the importance of calcium from school , media and family was at a medium level but that from health personnel was at a low level. Attitude towards the importance of calcium was at a high level. The Pearson' s correlation coefficients showed that perception of the importance of calcium was positively associated ($p < 0.001$) with the attitude towards the importance of calcium. Attitude towards the importance of calcium was positively associated ($p < 0.001$) with awareness of the importance of calcium. Awareness of the importance of calcium was positively associated ($p < 0.001$) with consumption of calcium containing foods. Gender was related to the awareness of the importance of calcium.