

The Evidence Against Soy

Dow Chemical and DuPont, the same corporations that brought misery and death to millions around the world through Agent Orange, are now the driving forces behind the promotion of soy as a food for humans. They are financing anti-meat and anti-milk campaigns aimed largely at those concerned about animal welfare and the environment, trying to convince them that imitations such as "soymilk" are not only healthier than the real thing, but better for the earth too.



There is no evidence that consuming soy products can improve health, reduce environmental degradation or slow global warming. In fact, the evidence suggests quite the opposite.

The studies below regarding the effects of soy on health are eye-opening, particularly the review by the American Heart Association -- which no longer supports the health claims about soy endorsed by the U.S. government.

[Overall risks and benefits of soy assessed](#)

[Latest review by American Heart Association](#)

[Soy inhibits iron absorption](#)

[Poor iron bioavailability](#)

[Poor calcium bioavailability](#)

[Calcium and zinc absorbed better from milk than from soy -- even without phytates](#)

[Soy provides no benefits with respect to heart disease risk](#)

[Soy causes bladder cancer](#)

[Soy isoflavones during pregnancy increase breast cancer risk in female offspring](#)

[High levels of cadmium in soy formula](#)

[Soy linked to peanut allergy and increased risk for asthma](#)

[Whole milk vs. soy beverage -- asthma risk](#)

[Persistent sexual arousal syndrome associated with increased soy intake](#)

[Genistein: Does it prevent or promote breast cancer?](#)

If you were to carefully review the thousands of studies published on soy, I strongly believe you too would reach

the conclusion that any possible benefits of consuming soy are FAR outweighed by the well documented risks.

Now, I'm not against all forms of soy. [Properly fermented products](#) like natto and tempeh have been consumed for centuries and do not wreak havoc in your body like unfermented soy products do. For example, the enzyme [nattokinase](#)—derived from natto—is a safer, more powerful option than aspirin to dissolve blood clots, and has been used safely for more than two decades. Unfortunately, many Americans still believe that unfermented and processed soy products like soy milk, soy cheese, soy burgers and soy ice cream are good for them.

85 Percent of Consumers Believe the Lies About Soy

The rise of soy as a health food is in large part due to highly successful marketing to otherwise health conscious Americans who set the trend. According to the survey [Consumer Attitudes About Nutrition 2008](#) (by the United Soybean Board), 85 percent of consumers now perceive soy products as healthy.

The survey also found that consumers:

- rank soybean oil among the top three healthy oils, with 70 percent recognizing soy oil as a healthy oil, and
- depend on soybean oil, commonly sold as vegetable oil, as one of their two most frequent cooking oils

This is a tragic case of shrewd marketing of misinformation and outright lies taking root among the masses, which will likely take some time to undo.

Ever since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a health claim for soy foods in 1999 (which said diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol that include 25 grams of soy protein a day may reduce the risk of heart disease), soy sales have skyrocketed. In the years between 2000 and 2007, food manufacturers in the U.S. introduced over 2,700 new foods with soy as an ingredient, including 161 new products introduced in 2007 alone.

This has resulted in a booming multi-billion dollar business. From 1992 to 2007, soy food sales increased from a paltry \$300 million to nearly \$4 billion, according to the Soyfoods Association of North America.

However, the Weston A. Price Foundation, a nonprofit nutrition education foundation, submitted a [petition](#) to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in January of this year, asking them to retract its heart-health claim from soy in light of the inconsistent and contradictory evidence showing benefits, and its many proven health risks.

What's So Wrong With Soy?

Unlike the Asian culture, where people eat small amounts of whole soybean products, western food processors separate the soybean into two golden commodities--protein and oil. And there is nothing natural or safe about these products

Says Dr. Kaayla Daniel, author of [The Whole Soy Story](#),

"Today's high-tech processing methods not only fail to remove the anti-nutrients and toxins that are naturally present in soybeans but leave toxic and carcinogenic residues created by the high temperatures, high pressure, alkali and acid baths and petroleum solvents."

Dr. Daniel also points out the findings of numerous studies reviewed by her and other colleagues -- that soy does not reliably lower cholesterol, and in fact raises homocysteine levels in many people, which has been found to increase your risk of stroke, birth defects, and yes: heart disease.

Other common health problems linked to a high-soy diet include:

- [Thyroid problems](#), including weight gain, lethargy, malaise, fatigue, hair loss, and loss of libido
- Premature puberty and other developmental problems in babies, children and adolescents
- [Cancer](#)
- [Brain damage](#)
- [Reproductive disorders](#)
- [Kidney stones](#)
- [Weakened immune system](#)
- [Severe, potentially fatal food allergies](#)

Most soy, perhaps about 80 percent or more, is also genetically modified, which adds [its own batch of health concerns](#).

Despite these findings, many people still want to believe the hype, thinking that these studies must somehow be wrong. But the content of soy itself should be a clue. For example, non-fermented soy products contain:

- Phytoestrogens (isoflavones) genistein and daidzein, which mimic and sometimes block the hormone estrogen
- Phytates, which block your body's uptake of minerals
- Enzyme Inhibitors, which hinder protein digestion
- Hemagglutinin, which causes red blood cells to clump together and inhibits oxygen take-up and growth
- High amounts of omega-6 fat, which is pro-inflammatory

You're Consuming Soy Whether You're Buying "Soy Products" or Not

Even if you know better than to gulp down large amounts of soy milk, slabs of tofu, and other soy snacks, you are still consuming soy if you're eating processed food, in the form of soybean oil and lecithin. So depending on your dietary habits, your (unfermented) soy consumption could really add up.

In fact, [Dr. Joseph Hibbeln at the National Institutes of Health](#) told CNN.com he estimates that soybeans, usually in the form of oil, account for 10 percent of the average person's total calories in the United States! When you consider that 90 percent of the money Americans spend on food goes toward processed food, this amount of "accidental" soy intake is not surprising.

As a side note, I'd like to make a quick statement here to address some of my readers' concerns about my reduced CoQ-10 supplement, ubiquinol, which also contain soy bean oil.

Unfortunately, the reduced CoQ-10 (ubiquinol) – which is the optimal form of CoQ -10 that your body needs, especially if you're over 25 – is only produced by a multi-billion dollar Japanese pharmaceutical company that holds ALL the world patents on it. Hence, there's no way to replace the soy, even though that would have been my preference.

However, as in all things, moderation is key. If I thought there were ANY significant health risks from consuming this **small** amount of soy oil, then I would not personally take two a day – which I do. I do however avoid all processed forms of soy products, and severely limit my intake of other unfermented soy, which is easy to do by simply avoiding processed and "fast" foods.

Which Soy Foods Should be Avoided ... and How do You Avoid Them?

Because soy is so pervasive in the U.S. food supply, avoiding it is not an easy task.

The best way to completely avoid soy in the food supply is to buy whole foods and prepare them yourself. This may also be your only option if you've developed a soy allergy and need to eliminate soy from your diet entirely.

If you still prefer to buy readymade and packaged products, for whatever reason, Dr. Daniel offers a [free Special Report, "Where the Soys Are,"](#) on her Web site. It lists the many "aliases" that soy might be hiding under in ingredient lists -- words like "boullion," "natural flavor" and "textured plant protein."

Which Soy Foods DO Have Health Benefits?

The few types of soy that ARE healthy are all fermented varieties. After a long fermentation process, the phytic acid and antinutrient levels of the soybeans are reduced, and their beneficial properties -- such as the creation of natural probiotics -- become available to your digestive system.

The fermentation process also greatly reduces the levels of dangerous isoflavones, which are similar to estrogen in their chemical structure, and can interfere with the action of your own estrogen production.

So if you want to eat soy that is actually good for you, following are all healthy options:

1. **Natto**, fermented soybeans with a sticky texture and strong, cheese-like flavor. It's loaded with nattokinase, a very powerful blood thinner. Natto is actually a food I eat regularly, as it is the highest source of vitamin K2 on the planet and has a very powerful beneficial bacteria, bacillus subtilis. It can usually be found in any Asian grocery store.
2. **Tempeh**, a fermented soybean cake with a firm texture and nutty, mushroom-like flavor.
3. **Miso**, a fermented soybean paste with a salty, buttery texture (commonly used in miso soup).
4. **Soy sauce**: traditionally, soy sauce is made by fermenting soybeans, salt and enzymes, however be wary because many varieties on the market are made artificially using a chemical process.

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