

The Truth About Soy



For several years there have been mixed reviews about soy products like tofu, tempeh, soy milk, and edamame. Are they healthy or harmful and should we be eating them? These questions are common because soy contains isoflavones known as phytoestrogens, causing people to believe these foods impact hormone levels. Modern research has shown us that soy is actually an important part of a healthy diet! Continue reading to debunk some common myths about soy.

Do soy products disrupt my hormones?

No! Soy isoflavones are similar to estrogen but they bind to estrogen receptors differently than estrogen made in the body. The estrogenic effects of soy are very weak and will not have a significant impact on hormone levels. Some research has even shown soy to have a balancing effect on estrogen levels, where consuming soy helps the body build estrogen up if it is low, such as in menopause, and also helps the body get rid of estrogen if there is too much, such as with breast cancer.

Does soy increase my risk of breast cancer?

No! Research has shown that soy consumption is either protective against breast cancer or has a neutral effect on risk but is not harmful. High consumption rates of soy food is one theory used to explain why breast cancer rates are significantly lower in Asian women, compared to other parts of the world.

Are soy foods safe for men?

Yes! Research has shown that consuming soy does not disrupt estrogen or testosterone levels in men. In fact, soy foods have been shown to lower risk for heart disease, one of the leading causes of death in men, and new research indicates soy foods may lower prostate cancer risk.

What foods contain soy and who should eat them?

Everyone should eat soy foods, but the positive impact will be greater for some populations over others. Soy foods can be especially beneficial during perimenopause and menopause, by supporting estrogen's role in reducing hot flashes and improving bone health. Soy foods are a great source of protein and are rich in B vitamins, potassium, magnesium, and fibre. The protein content of soy helps build muscle, while the potassium and magnesium benefit artery health, lowering heart disease risk.



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Crispy Tofu Recipe

Serving Size: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 350g package of extra-firm tofu, drained and patted dry
- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1 cup panko
- ½ cup milk alternative (almond, coconut, soy)
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp avocado oil or other neutral frying oil



Instructions:

1. Cut the tofu into 1-inch cubes. Pat the cubes dry with paper towel or a clean cloth.
2. Set up 3 shallow bowls, one with cornstarch, one with milk, and one with panko, paprika, garlic powder, and salt (combined).
3. Toss each cube of tofu in cornstarch, then milk, then the panko spice blend to cover all sides. Set the breaded and spiced tofu cubes on a separate plate.
4. Cook the tofu: fry with some oil in a pan, bake it in the oven, or toss it in the air fryer. If frying, this will take about 4-5 minutes each side with medium heat, until all sides are golden brown. If baking, heat your oven to 350 degrees F, cook for 15 minutes, then rotate the tofu and cook for 15 minutes on the other side.
5. Serve in a bowl with stir-fried vegetables, quinoa, or as lettuce wraps. You can add mango salsa, edamame, avocado, and your favourite sauce.

| Nutrition Facts | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Per 1 serving | |
| Calories | 180 cal |
| Carbohydrates | 8g |
| Fat | 12g |
| Protein | 10g |
| Sugar | 2g |
| Sodium | 600mg |

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