



Is Soy Dangerous?

Soybeans, along with foods made from them, have been the subject of much debate, yet the research is overwhelmingly in their favor, demonstrating undeniable health benefits, including:

Heart Health: Soyfoods may lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol, which reduces the risk of heart disease. This is partly due to their content of isoflavones and the high level of polyunsaturated fats, including omega-3 fatty acids.

Bone Health: The isoflavones in soy may help in maintaining bone density, offering a protective effect against osteoporosis, especially in postmenopausal women.

Reduced Cancer Risk: Consumption of soyfoods has been linked to a reduced risk of certain cancers, including breast and prostate cancer. The isoflavones are thought to play a key role in this protective effect.

Improved Menopausal Symptoms: Soy isoflavones can mimic estrogen in the body, which may help alleviate hot flashes and other symptoms of menopause.

Excellent Quality Protein: Soy contains all nine essential amino acids – and what a bonus when protein comes naturally packaged in a food that is also a great source of fiber, antioxidants, and phytonutrients!

Weight Control: Soyfoods are low in saturated fats and high in fiber, which can help in feeling full longer and managing hunger.

Lower Diabetes Risk: Soyfoods might help in the prevention of type 2 diabetes, thanks to their ability to improve insulin resistance and reduce fasting blood sugar levels.

Reduced Inflammation: Isoflavones and other components in soyfoods may have anti-inflammatory properties, which can be beneficial in reducing the risk of various chronic diseases.

Digestive Health: The high fiber content in soyfoods can help improve bowel movements and contribute to a healthy digestive system.

General Disease Prevention: Soyfoods contain antioxidants, which can help in fighting free radicals in the body, reducing oxidative stress, and potentially lowering the risk of various diseases.

Here are answers to the most commonly asked questions about soy:

But, doesn't soy have estrogen? NO! Soy contains phytoestrogens, plant-based compounds that mimic estrogen in some ways, but are not the same as the hormone produced by humans and other animals. Far from being harmful, phytoestrogens in soy, most notably isoflavones, protect your health.

Are all forms of soy good for me? Like any food, the less processed, the better. Edamame (young green soybeans), dried and cooked soybeans, tofu, tempeh, miso, soy nuts/soy nut butter, and soy milk are excellent choices. Go easy on soybean oil and isolated soy protein, often used in vegetarian meat substitutes, supplements, and bars.

How can I get more soy in my diet? Search online for highly rated recipes containing soyfoods. You can also incorporate soyfoods into dishes you already enjoy. For example, if you love peanut sauce, try baked tofu cubes dipped in peanut sauce. Add silken tofu to your smoothie. Use edamame in your next bean dip. Use firm tofu in your next scramble. Swap chicken for tempeh in your next BBQ sandwich. You get the picture!

Easy Tofu Stir-Fry with Vegetables



This dish is healthy, delicious, and easy to prepare, making it perfect for a weeknight dinner. Bonus – it costs only \$1.07 per serving! (Grocery prices are from Aldi and Walmart.)

Ingredients:

- 1 lb extra firm tofu (\$1.59)
- 2 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce (\$0.10)
- 1 Tbsp canola oil (\$0.10)
- 1 Tbsp sesame oil (\$0.15)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (\$0.05)
- 1 inch piece of ginger, minced (\$0.10)
- 1 bell pepper, sliced (\$0.70)
- 1 medium carrot, julienned (\$0.15)
- 1 small head of broccoli, cut into florets (\$0.85)
- 2 green onions, sliced (\$0.20)
- 1 Tbsp cornstarch (\$0.05)
- 1/4 cup water (\$0.00)
- 2 Tbsp hoisin sauce (\$0.20)
- 2 Tbsp sesame seeds for garnish (\$0.05)

Instructions:

Wrap the tofu in a clean kitchen towel or paper towels. Place a heavy object on top (like a skillet) to press out excess water for about 15-30 minutes (this is a good time to prep the veggies and get the rice started, if making). Then, cut the tofu into 1-inch cubes.

In a large bowl, mix 1 tablespoon of soy sauce with minced garlic and ginger. Add the tofu cubes to the marinade and gently toss to coat. Let it sit for at least 15 minutes.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the remaining soy sauce, hoisin sauce, cornstarch, and water until smooth. Set aside.

Heat the canola oil in a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add the marinated tofu cubes and fry until golden on all sides, about 5-7 minutes. Remove the tofu from the skillet and set aside.

In the same skillet, add the sesame oil. Stir-fry the bell pepper, carrot, and broccoli until they start to soften, about 5 minutes.

Return the tofu to the skillet with the vegetables. Add the stir-fry sauce and toss everything together until the sauce thickens and coats the tofu and vegetables, about 2 minutes.

Sprinkle on the green onions and sesame seeds. Serve hot with brown rice or noodles

Serves 4.