

A photograph of a glass of soy milk on a wooden surface. In the background, there is a wooden bowl filled with soybeans. Some soybeans are scattered on the wooden surface in the foreground. The text "The Truth About Soy" is overlaid in white on a dark grey rectangular background.

The Truth About Soy

The Truth About Soy

Who Can Eat it, What Type to Eat, and Ideas for Getting it into
Your Diet

There is a lot of misinformation out there about soy. Some tout it as a health food, others say avoid it like the plague. The answer, of course, is not that simple.

Confusion like this, unfortunately, common in nutrition where there are many studies done by Big Food. When Big Food asks a researcher to conduct a study about one of their products, they generally make it clear what result they would like and, surprise, surprise, they usually get it. After all, they are the ones who cut the researchers' pay checks.

Thankfully there are other organizations out there doing nutrition research and we can always look to cultural practices to clear up any remaining confusion.

So, with all that said, let's take a look at the pros and cons of one of the most ubiquitous foods in the Standard American Diet. What? You didn't know it was ubiquitous?

Unfortunately, yes. Soy (GMO soy at that) is in most processed foods these days thanks to subsidies by the US government to farmers who grow it. (This is the same for corn (GMO corn at that), but that is a whole other PDF.

Why to Avoid Soy, especially GMO Soy:

Attention: If you see soy in your non-organic food product, it is GMO.

- ❖ It is loaded with glyphosate. Recently Monsanto (the maker of Roundup/glyphosate) was ordered to pay over 80 million dollars to a farming couple who were diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma from regularly using Round-up. This is something you definitely do not want in your food!
- ❖ GMO soy has less protein than organic soy
- ❖ Soy contains antinutrients (phytates) which bind to the vitamins and minerals in your food effectively stealing it from you.
- ❖ Soy contains lectins which can be irritating to an inflamed gut and sometimes cause food sensitivities.
- ❖ Is full of goitrogens which dampen thyroid hormone production.
- ❖ Is a common food allergy/sensitivity. Many people are unknowingly reacting to the soy they are consuming. They do not realize that the vague symptoms that seem unrelated are, in fact, due to their soy consumption.
- ❖ Soy has phytoestrogens which are estrogen mimickers. If you are a man, it is clear why you should avoid putting estrogen mimickers in your body, but also premenopausal women should avoid this as well. Too much estrogen in the body (Estrogen Dominance) causes symptoms such as:
 - Bloating
 - Hot Flashes
 - Depression
 - Irregular periods
 - Increased PMS
 - Headaches
 - Mood Swings
 - Increased risk of breast cancer
 - Increased risk of cervical cancer
 - Increased risk of PCOS (polycystic ovary syndrome).

I guess I Had Better Stop Eating Soy...

Not so fast! Consuming FERMENTED SOY like traditional cultures have for thousands of years has great health benefits!

Fermented Soy:

- ❖ Is loaded with probiotics which feed and balance your microbiome
- ❖ Is full of vitamin K2, which is a harder vitamin to get if you are eating the Standard American Diet (SAD). Vitamin K2:
 - Is crucial for preventing heart disease
 - Is crucial for bone and teeth health
 - Plays a role in kidney health
 - Is important for brain health
 - Helps prevent cancer
 - Improves Insulin Sensitivity
 - Works synergistically with the other fat soluble vitamins D3, A, and E
- ❖ Has no antinutrients to steal your vitamins and minerals
- ❖ Has only neutralized goitrogens so it does not dampen thyroid hormone production.

What are the types of fermented soy?

- ❖ Natto: fermented soybeans
- ❖ Miso: a salty, savory (umami) fermented soybean paste
- ❖ Traditionally prepared tofu (look at the label carefully to determine if it actually has been traditionally prepared!)
- ❖ Tamari: traditionally fermented soy sauce

Who can consume fermented soy and how much is safe to consume?

Fermented Soy is Safe to consume as a condiment if you:

- ❖ Do not have a soy allergy or sensitivity. In order to determine this, you must eliminate ALL soy from your diet for 3 weeks. After 3 weeks, you can test soy in your diet to look for a reaction or reactions.
 - In order to test, eat some fermented soy one day and see if you have an immediate reaction. Look for headaches, brain fog, skin disorders (like worsening eczema or acne) stuffiness, gastrointestinal symptoms such as bloating, cramping, diarrhea, constipation, etc.
 - If you don't have any reactions, you can test it again the next day. Look for the same set of symptoms.
 - Repeat a third time that same week. Look for the same set of symptoms.
 - If you went the whole week without any of those symptoms (or any other unusual new symptom), congratulations!! You can eat fermented soy as a condiment.

Ideas for getting Miso into your Diet:

- ❖ Stir into bone broth or soups after you take them off of the stove (so that you don't kill the beneficial bacteria). A good ratio is 1 tablespoon to 2 cups of broth.
- ❖ Stir into [mayo](#) for a tasty dipping sauce.
- ❖ Make a miso salad dressing.
- ❖ Use to flavor cooked meat and fish. Just rub on after pulling the meat or fish off of the heat.

Where to Look for Soy:

Sometimes soy is in products where you would least expect it. To be sure you are not inadvertently consuming soy, look for soy here:

- ❖ Baked goods like donuts, cookies, cakes, etc.
- ❖ Infant formula (Yikes!! This one is scary, people! Our children do not need a higher risk of cancer!)
- ❖ Canned broths and soups
- ❖ Cereals
- ❖ low-fat peanut butter
- ❖ Processed meats
- ❖ Sauces
- ❖ Soaps and moisturizers
- ❖ Crackers
- ❖ Vegetable gums
- ❖ Vegetable starches
- ❖ Asian restaurants (Chinese, Thai, Indian, Indonesian, and Vietnamese)

Is there any type of unfermented soy that is safe?

Generally organic soy lecithin is safe (and has some documented health benefits) as long as you do not have a soy allergy or sensitivity. This is often in chocolate bars, chocolate chips and chunks, ice cream, dairy products, and supplements to name a few. Be sure that it is an organic product so that you know the soy lecithin hasn't been made from GMO soy!

