

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S  
*Herbal Legacy Newsletter*

## The School of Natural Healing's Official Stance on Soy

May 6, 2009

What is soy? A soybean is a legume – soybeans are rich in protein, omega-3 fatty acids, tryptophan, fiber, iron and other minerals.



A big problem comes when people become “vegetarians” and start eating a lot of processed soy food – including soy hot dogs, soy hamburgers, soy bacon, soy sausage, soy yogurt, soy ice cream, and just about any other type of “health food” soy products. If you have been in almost any health food (except Dr. Christopher’s Herb Shop) you will find the aisles, “non-dairy dairy” section and frozen food aisle packed with almost every imaginable soy-based product, all touted as health foods. When these foods become a regular part of your diet they are *not* healthy – they can occasionally be used as a meat substitute as part of an otherwise healthy diet and you will be fine. David Christopher says if you are trying to decide between a slice of bacon and a slice of soy bacon go with the soy bacon – in moderation and only once in a while. In other words, they are a transition food.

The problem with most of these foods is that they are highly processed and use genetically modified soybeans. The majority of soybeans in the United States are genetically modified, which is not good for your health. For more information on the problems associated with genetically modified foods read the article here: <http://articles.herballegacy.com/nightmare-on-elm-streets-dinner-table-genetically-modified-food-morgellons-disease/>. If you are going to buy these foods check the package and try to find one that says “Non-GMO” for a better alternative.

PCRM (Physician’s Committee for Responsible Medicine) says, “It is useful to remember that the more we mimic a meat and dairy diet by using soy products that are altered in various ways for flavor and mouth-feel, the further away we get from healthier foods.” For the most part we encourage you to avoid these foods – you don’t need them, and if eaten often can be very detrimental to your health.

However, in their organic state soy can be a healthy addition to a healthy diet. Organic soybeans that have been fermented are also healthy – this includes miso, tempeh and some soy sauces.

What about soymilk? The School has always taught that soymilk is *not* a beverage to drink on a regular basis – distilled water and fresh juices should be the main beverages you drink. However,

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using some organically made soymilk (preferably made at home – see recipe below) in your fruit shake or in other recipes is fine. It is better than using cow's milk! You can also make delicious nut milks – see our recipe section for some nut and rice milk recipes -

<http://www.herballegacy.com/Beverages.html>. You will find some recipes, including soups, on our site that use soymilk. You will continue to see these recipes on occasion – but we will always link the recipes to our recipe for organic soy milk.

What about tofu? Many Asian people include tofu in their diets – Dr. Ben Kim, who is of Korean descent, says, “Sometimes tofu, once it's made, is fermented to produce fermented tofu dishes in East Asian cooking – mostly Chinese. The bottom line for me is that I know enough healthy Korean and Chinese folks in their 80's and even their 90's who have long enjoyed den jang (miso) and tofu to believe that including some soy in one's diet is fine for most people.”

Please note that we aren't encouraging you to eat soy – if you don't like it or you have allergic or other negative reactions to it then don't eat it. If you like it and use it in its organic and/or organic fermented state then it is fine (as part of an overall healthy diet).

PCRM concludes a great article about soy with this: “Soy has many attributes that make it useful for those transitioning to healthful diets, although it is quite easy to follow a healthy, low-fat, vegan diet without using soy. For those who prefer to add soy products to their diets, it is prudent to emphasize the least processed sources of soy, such as edamame, tempeh, tofu, and soymilk, as part of a diet that includes other legumes, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Other soy products, including vegetarian meat and dairy substitutes, may be helpful for people who are making healthful changes from meat- and dairy-based diets.”

For more detailed information about soy, including a discussion of the studies done about soy and its effect on Alzheimer's, thyroid function, breast cancer and reproductive health, please check out the links below.

#### Sources and Additional Information

- A Healthier You Radio March 28, 2009 (during the caller portion of the show)
- Dr. Ben Kim: The Place of Soy in the Health Food Arena <http://drbenkim.com/soy-health.htm>
- Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine: Soy and Your Health [http://www.pcrm.org/health/prevmed/soy\\_health.html](http://www.pcrm.org/health/prevmed/soy_health.html)