

Adding Soy to Your Diet

Soy foods are good sources of B vitamins, minerals, fiber and protein. Soy foods have many health benefits. Soy products are lower in “bad fats” (also known as saturated fats) and higher in “good fats” (also known as polyunsaturated fats).

Soy foods may help fight heart disease by lowering levels of LDL or “bad” cholesterol.

Use soy foods to increase plant protein in your diet by replacing animal protein to achieve heart health benefits. This change can help you increase the healthy fats, fiber, vitamins, and minerals in your diet, and lower the unhealthy fat content.

Guard against cancer. If you are at risk for breast cancer, we suggest moderate amounts of whole soy foods (tofu, soy milk, tempeh, edamame, etc.), but you should avoid isolated soy products (soy protein powders, soy supplements, and texturized vegetable protein). If you have breast cancer talk with your doctor about soy.

Getting Started

There are many ways to add soy products into your diet. You should focus on less processed soy foods such as soy milk, soy flour, tofu, tempeh, and edamame, rather than the many highly processed soy products sold in grocery stores.

Soy Foods

Soy foods are products made from soybeans which are processed to make products like those listed below.

Soy milk is made by soaking, grinding and straining soybeans. You can use it instead of cow’s milk in any recipe or as a drink. Plain soy milk is a good source of protein (7

grams) and B-vitamins. If you are using soy milk instead of dairy products, make sure the soy milk has calcium. The original and unsweetened soy milk are the best options as they have the lowest amount of added sugar.

Tofu is a soft cheese-like food made from curds of soy milk. It is bland on its own but picks up flavors of other foods. You can use it to make stir-fries, dips, shakes, desserts, kabobs, and soups. One cup of tofu can provide up to 20 grams of protein. You can find tofu in the refrigerated produce section of your grocery store or in “juice box” packaging on the shelf of the natural foods section. You can store tofu up to one week in the refrigerator or up to five months in the freezer. You can get it in extra firm, firm, soft or silken textures. Types include:

- **Water packed tofu.** This tofu must always be covered with water that should be changed daily. It comes in soft, firm, extra firm, and regular. It is the best for freezing and thawing, which makes the texture meatier, and much more like a meat substitute.
- **Silken or vacuum-packed tofu.** This tofu is custard like and ideal for soups, desserts, and drinks. Silken tofu is too delicate to stir-fry, sauté, or grill. It comes in soft, firm, and extra firm textures.
- **Baked tofu.** This seasoned, marinated, extra-firm tofu is ready-to-use. Use it in sandwiches as a filling. It is a great substitute for chicken or tuna and is very good in stir-fry.
- **Smoked tofu.** This tofu is smoked on beech-wood. It is great in soups and stews.

- **Reduced Fat Tofu.** Several brands of tofu make a reduced fat or light version of their products. It can be used in recipes the way regular fat tofu is used.

Tempeh is a cake of fermented soybeans with a nutty or smoky flavor. It is sold at most natural food stores and large grocery stores. One half cup can add up to 16 grams of protein. Great when grilled, sautéed, pan-crisped, or braised. You can freeze tempeh up to one year.

Soybean pasta is made from whole soybeans and can be a lower carbohydrate, high fiber, high protein substitute for wheat pasta. The soybean pasta has a similar texture, taste and color to wheat pasta and even has a similar cooking time. You can find it in the natural food aisle at most grocery stores.

Soy flour is made from roasted soybeans that have been ground into a fine powder. It does not contain gluten, so if you want to increase protein content of a recipe that uses wheat flour you can replace about 35-50% of the wheat flour with soy flour. Soy flour tends to brown more quickly, so you should lower the oven temperature when baking products with soy flour. One fourth of a cup can add up to eight grams of protein. There are two kinds of soy flour:

Full-fat flour contains the natural oils that are found in soybeans. You can replace 1/4 cup of the regular flour with soy flour to increase protein content. Silken tofu can be used to make cookies, soft yeast breads, and quick breads, though it's important to store

these products in the fridge or freezer after baking.

Defatted flour contains very little fat since most of the oil is removed. You can use 2 Tbsp with all-purpose flour or any other flour in recipes. Works best in lighter texture yeast breads. You can store it on the shelf.

Textured soy protein (TSP) is a textured soy flour that is sold in granules or chunks. TSP has a chewy texture and can be used as a meat extender or meat replacement. Each ½ cup prepared can add up to 11 grams of protein. You can find it in the freezer section of the grocery store as soy burgers and soy “crumbles” to use in place of ground beef.

Soy oils are extracted from the soybean and have a blend of omega 3 and 6 fatty acids.

Soy cheese. Soft soy cheese can be used instead of sour cream or cream cheese. The firmer cheese can be used like dairy cheese. Soy cheese does not melt the way dairy cheeses melt. Firmer soy cheese is often colored or flavored to look like dairy cheeses.

Soy Cookbooks

The Art of Tofu by Akasha Richmond

Cooking with Tofu by Robert McBride

Soy of Cooking by Marie Osier

Soyfoods Cookery by Louise Hagler

Super Soy: The Miracle Bean by Ruth Winter

The Tempeh Cookbook by Dorothy Bates

The Tofu Cookbook by Leah Leneman

Tofu Quick and Easy by Louise Hagler

With a Little Help From the Soybean by

Julia Elliot

Recipes

Breakfast Shake

1/2 c silken tofu (about 4 oz)
3/4 c sweetened frozen strawberries
1 banana
2 ice cubes

Combine all ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth. Serve right away.
Yield: 1 - 12 oz. serving.

Calories: 355 Protein: 10g; Sodium: 45mg;
Carbs: 40.7g; Fat: 4g; Saturated Fat: 0.7g;
Cholesterol: 0mg

Tofu Scramble

12 oz. firm or extra firm, lite tofu
(refrigerated block)
1 tsp Olive oil (or use pan spray)
2 green onions, sliced
1 large garlic clove, pressed or minced
2 Tbsp green bell peppers, chopped
2 Tbsp red bell peppers, chopped
4 medium fresh mushrooms, sliced
Dash cayenne pepper, dash of turmeric
(optional)
1 tsp. salt (optional)

Mash tofu with fork and put in microwave-safe bowl and microwave 1 minute. Meanwhile, heat frying pan and coat with oil or pan spray; sauté vegetables until crisp-tender. Add red pepper and tofu and combine. Mix in spices. Serve warm with toast or rolled in a tortilla. Yield: 4 servings.

Calories: 70; Protein: 6g; Sodium: 135mg;
Carbs: 5g; Fat: 3.5g; Saturated fat: 0.5g;
Cholesterol: 0mg

Three-Grain Muffins

1/3 c stone ground corn meal
1/3 c soy flour
1 c whole wheat pastry flour
3/4 tsp baking soda
1 c plain yogurt (or soy yogurt)
1/4 c honey or 1/3 c. sugar
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1/3 c canola oil
1/2 tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium bowl, combine dry ingredients. In a separate bowl, mix wet ingredients, then pour into dry mix. Stir until moist, do not over mix. Fill muffin cups 2/3 full and bake 25 minutes or until golden brown. Yield: 12 muffins (1 muffin per serving).

Calories: 151; Protein: 3g; Sodium: 190mg;
Carbs: 12.4g; Fat: 7g; Saturated fat: 0.7;
Cholesterol: 18mg

Tomato Bisque Soup

2 t olive oil
1 med. onion, diced
1 clove garlic, minced
30 oz can stewed tomatoes
1 tsp dill
Salt to taste
1/2 tsp white pepper
1 c soy milk
2 tsp sugar or honey
10 oz lite firm silken tofu

Sauté onions on medium heat; add garlic and stir to avoid burning. Add the rest of the ingredients, except tofu. Heat through and remove from burner to cool 10 minutes. Transfer to food processor or blender, add tofu and puree until smooth. Serve hot or chilled. Yield: 4 entrée-sized servings.

Calories: 156; Protein: 9g; Sodium: 840mg;
Carbs: 21.5g; Fat: 5.6g; Saturated fat: 0.8g;
Cholesterol: 0mg

Hold the Eggs Salad

12 oz extra firm lite silken tofu
1/3 c fat-free or lite mayonnaise, lite Miracle
Whip, or mayo
1 Tbsp yellow mustard (for flavor and color)
1 tsp turmeric
1 Tbsp diced vegetables (a mix of bell
pepper, celery, and onion)
Dash black pepper, if desired

Crumble tofu in a bowl. Stir in the rest of
the ingredients. Serve on pita or bread with
lettuce leaves for a tasty and quick main
dish. Put leftovers in fridge. Yield: Filling
for 4 sandwiches.

Calories: 70; Protein: 6g; Sodium: 325mg;
Carbs: 5g; Fat: 2.5g; Saturated fat: 0.4mg;
Cholesterol: 0 mg

Asian Noodles

8 oz. firm tofu
1/4 c. low sodium soy sauce
2 Tbsp rice wine vinegar
1 tsp sugar
1 Tbsp dark sesame oil (for flavoring)
1/2 Tbsp canola oil (for stir frying)
3 c. coleslaw mix
1 garlic clove
3/4 pound angel hair pasta
2 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
Cooking spray

Cut tofu into 1/4-inch-thick strips and place
in bowl. Make marinade by combining soy
sauce, vinegar, sugar and sesame oil. Pour
over tofu and place in refrigerator at least 4
hours.

Spray cookie sheet with pan spray and
spread tofu strips in single layer. Bake 20
minutes at 350 degrees or until desired

firmness. Reserve marinade. Start boiling
water for pasta. Just after adding angel hair,
heat large skillet over medium heat. Add oil
and stir-fry slaw mix and garlic 2 minutes.
Reduce heat to low and stir in the rest of the
marinade.

Cook pasta 3 to 4 minutes or until done.
Drain.

Gently toss hot pasta, cooked slaw mix and
baked tofu in a large bowl. Garnish with
chopped cilantro (avoid adding during
cooking, as this diminishes flavor). Note: If
you cannot find coleslaw mix, substitute 2½
cups shredded cabbage and 1 cup shredded
carrot.

The sesame oil that gives this dish its flavor
is dark brown in color, and you can find it at
most grocery stores in the Asian food
section. Rice-wine vinegar is also found in
the Asian foods area. Yield: 4 servings
(main course).

Calories: 460; Protein: 18g; Sodium:
615mg; Carbs: 47.2g; Fat: 9g; Saturated fat:
1.2mg; Cholesterol: 0mg

Peanut Butter Spread

12 oz. lite silken tofu
1/2 c. peanut butter
1 large banana
2 Tbsp lemon juice
2 Tbsp honey

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food
processor and puree until smooth. Serve on
whole grain bread for a spread which is
lower in fat than plain peanut butter. Try
topping with nuts, raisins or sliced bananas
for variety. Yield: Spread for 6 sandwiches.

Calories: 190; Protein: 9.5g; Sodium:
940mg; Carbs: 16.1g; Fat: 11g; Saturated
fat: 2.2g; Cholesterol: 0mg

Vegetable Stroganoff

2 beef or vegetable bouillon cubes (or equivalent to make 2 c. broth per package directions)

1/2 c. boiling water

6 oz firm lite silken tofu

1 tsp olive oil or pan spray

2 c. fresh mushrooms, sliced

1 med onion, halved and sliced crosswise

2 tsp soy sauce

2 Tbsp dry sherry

1/2 tsp black pepper

16 oz fat free sour cream

3 c. fresh vegetables, chopped in bite sized pieces (a mixture of cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, peppers)

16 oz egg noodles

Boil water for noodles. Dissolve bouillon in 1/2 cup water then place in blender or food processor; add tofu and puree. Heat pan on medium-high heat, then add oil. Sauté mushrooms and onions then season with soy sauce, sherry and pepper. Stir in tofu mix and heat. Stir in sour cream and reduce heat to low; do not boil or sour cream may separate. Steam vegetables. Cook noodles. Serve veggies over noodles, then top with sauce. Yield: 6 servings.

Calories: 440; Protein: 19g; Sodium: 595mg; Carbs: 32.6g; Fat: 4.5g; Saturated fat: 0.9g; Cholesterol: 70mg

Pesto Alfredo

8 oz. tube pasta

5 oz. silken tofu

1/4 c. pesto

salt to taste

3 c. bite-sized, raw vegetables (such as, broccoli, carrots, red bell pepper and mushrooms)

Start water boiling for pasta and cook according to package instructions.

Meanwhile, place tofu and pesto in food processor or blender and puree; salt per taste

(depending on salt content of pesto). Stir-fry vegetables; starting with those requiring more cooking (such as carrots) and ending with those needing less (such as mushrooms); heat until tender-crisp. Toss together hot cooked pasta, sauce and veggies in large bowl and serve. Yield: 4 servings (main course).

Calories: 295; Protein: 12.5g; Sodium: 98mg; Carbs: 28.9g; Fat: 5g; Saturated Fat: 1.0g; Cholesterol: 4mg

Banana Snack Cake

Cooking spray

2 c. cake flour or sifted whole wheat pastry flour

3 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

1 tsp baking soda

1/4 tsp salt

1/3 c. extra firm silken tofu

1/3 c. water

2 tsp lemon juice

3/4 c. ripe bananas, mashed

2/3 c. sugar

1/4 c. honey

3 Tbsp canola oil

1 tsp vinegar

2 tsp vanilla extract

1/3 c. mini or regular chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat 8"x12" baking pan with cooking spray and dust with flour.

Sift flour, cocoa, soda and salt into medium sized bowl. Puree tofu, water and lemon juice in a food processor or blender, then add bananas, sugar, honey, oil, vinegar and vanilla; puree. Add wet ingredients to dry and mix just until dry ingredients are moist. Pour batter into pan and smooth with spatula. Sprinkle with chocolate chips. Bake 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Yield: 10 servings.

Calories: 260; Protein: 3g; Sodium: 200g;
Carbs: 43.7g; Fat: 7g; Saturated fat: 1.3g;
Cholesterol: 1mg

Pumpkin Pie

The tofu replaces the dairy products in the recipe. It is so good and smooth.

1 unbaked pie crust
15 ounces canned pumpkin
12 ounces extra firm silken style tofu
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup sugar or 3/4 cup honey
1/4 teaspoon salt
1½ teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon cloves

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Press pie crust into a 9-inch pan. Set aside. In a food processor bowl combine pumpkin, tofu, eggs, sugar and spices. Process until smooth. Pour into unbaked crust. Bake for 50 – 60 minutes or until filling is set. Filling will appear soft but will become firmer as it chills. Serve with light whipped cream.

Who to Call

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, please contact UW Health at the phone number listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 2/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#344