
Soy

Posted by sandy - 2009/06/29 08:25

The question Vegans have thrown at them all the time. Is soy safe?

I've'd o keep telling people here for the last year or so that soymilk does NOT cause impotence. :|

Somehow ... soy does not seem such a big issue outside the media. I havent seen such attention given to soy by researchers and nutritionists as rendered by the media. Something fishy? Are the dairy boards (cow-breast-milk-drinking men) after the soy industry?

Anyhow, given the public's tendency to associate soy and tofu with veganism, I think it is good to have information on this subject. I know many people who have been dissuaded from replacing dairy with soy milk by an unwarranted fear of (soy leading to) impotence.

I've been wanting to start a thread on soy, where we collect our own research information on this issue.

The best article on this that I have come across so far is on the following link.

<http://www.drmcDougall.com/misc/pdf/pdf050400nl.pdf>

Jeff Novick also recommends no more than 60-70 ml (two ounces) of soy milk/tofu a day, and NO processed soy (like fake meats, chocolates etc) as far as possible.

If you've come across stuff on soy-related issues before/after, please share.

Thanks :)

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Re:Soy

Posted by Suasoria - 2009/06/29 18:10

I just skimmed the PDF, but it looks good to me. He doesn't mention allergies, though. Like dairy, soy is a very common allergen, especially in children. Digestive intolerance to soy is also fairly common (allergies are different than intolerances). Many people live for years feeling yucky until they realize they have a soy allergy or intolerance.

I've heard that people with thyroid conditions or immune disorders, or a family history of either, may want to avoid massive amounts of soy because soy isoflavones can trigger symptoms like fatigue, weight gain, mood swings and depression.

Aside from health, there is some reason for concern about soy from an environmental perspective. One, nearly all soy is GMO; two, massive amount of pesticides and herbicides are used in its cultivation; three, we are over-reliant on it because we grow so much soy to feed livestock, and monoculture is bad for the soil and the local ecosystems. (The answer to this, of course, is for people to stop eating animals.) But I would never advise eating soy/tofu that is not labeled organic, and because soy is in so many processed foods, I would be concerned about the proportion of soy relative to other foods - again not usually an issue for vegans who eat plenty of fruits, veggies and grains.

But my take is most of the arguments against soy come from the meat/dairy industry, and possibly a little bit from breastfeeding advocates warning against soy-based formulas (which I feel is legit). Individuals working in the health industry might use scare tactics to elevate their "guru status" so you come to rely on them for the "truth" (and buy their products, books, etc.).

This is a good piece - <http://www.veganhealth.org/articles/soymessina>

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Re:Soy

Posted by gmphil - 2009/06/30 08:56

Yes, I quite agree with you, and would especially re-iterate the importance of eating organic, for both health and bio/geo/political reasons.

Impotence is a new one on me - I guess they decided the altzheimer's scare wasn't working any more so thought they'd better try another tack!

The dairy industry in particular has been fighting a long and dirty war against soy - for obvious reasons. Some years ago they browbeat the spineless EU into passing a law that the term "Soya milk" be banned, and replaced with "Soya drink" or, at best, "Soya alternative to milk". Disgraceful, really. (I didn't hear them arguing against the term "coconut milk"...)

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