

NUTRI-SPEC



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THE NUTRI-SPEC LETTER

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From:
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Dear Doctor,

The health food industry is at it again. It's propaganda machines are cranked up into high gear -- spewing out tons of garbage on the purported health benefits of soy products. As usual, your patients have been swept off their feet by this heavily hyped and mega financed sales pitch. You are certain to have encountered the soy propaganda yourself -- and you, too, may have found it convincing. After all, the health food industry is quite adept at quoting the scientific literature selectively and out of context.

It is our goal to see that all NUTRI-SPEC practitioners, and all your patients, enjoy the benefits of scientific truth applied to nutrition. To that end, we are engaged in a never-ending battle against quackery and charlatanism in the marketing of nutrition products.

Until now, we in NUTRI-SPEC customer service have been dealing with the soy foods issue on an individual basis -- enlightening each of you as you call in with questions or comments regarding the effect of soy on one of your patient's health, or wondering how it might fit into your own family's nutrition regimen. But now, since the soy issue has become a monster of such grotesque proportions, we must deal with it in this Letter.

The soy propaganda machine is a perfect example of how deviously under-handed the natural food industry can be. There are three principle purported benefits for which soy products are promoted -- and each one is ludicrous.

Soy is often included as a source of protein in health food products. Your patients must understand that soybeans are entirely indigestible. To obtain a somewhat digestible "food," the soy protein products are severely de-natured by prolonged exposure to high temperatures, not to mention the oxidation exposure as they are blown into a fine powder. Because of their difficulty of digestion, plus their extremely processed and de-natured qualities, these are a deplorable choice as a source of protein.

Not only is the protein in soy toxic garbage because it is so extremely de-natured, but the soy protein is woefully incomplete as it severely lacks the critical amino acids methionine and cysteine (and that is even before you account for the lysine and glutamine and other amino acids that are destroyed in the processing). Furthermore, soy beans contain potent enzyme inhibitors which actually block the action of trypsin and other enzymes needed for protein digestion.

So -- soy as a source of protein? You could laugh at such nonsense except that so many of your patients have fallen for it.

Many soy products are promoted because of the chemicals that have been isolated from soy that are anti-cancer. It turns out that every word that the natural food industry says about certain substances in soy decreasing cancer is true. There are several substances that have been isolated from soy that have shown a beneficial effect on a few forms of cancer -- and this piece of truth is what the health food industry has seized upon in their promotions. The problem is that there are even more substances that have been isolated from soy that cause cancer, and the health food industry conveniently ignores that information.

The third promotional point used by the health food industry for soy products is their estrogenic effect. This is the most absurd notion of all. The phytoestrogens isolated from soy are a major problem when used therapeutically, for the very reason that they do have estrogen activity. Almost all people (including both women and men) are suffering the effects of excess estrogen -- which is a damaging stress hormone. Because of their estrogenic activity, these soy products accelerate aging, exacerbate cardiovascular disease, contribute to osteoporosis, etc, etc.

We could cite countless studies from the scientific literature demonstrating the estrogenic effect of soy, and these are some of the same studies quoted by the health food industry. The conclusion reached by these researchers was that they were alarmed by the toxic estrogenic activity of soy products. It was demonstrated that these phytoestrogens from soy have all the damaging effects of estrogen -- including causing breast cancer, inhibiting the thyroid, elevating cholesterol, causing osteoporosis, etc.

All the health food industry did was quote out of context from these articles showing that phytoestrogens have estrogen activity, and then tried to peddle them to women entering menopause. This lack of integrity is the norm in the natural foods industry.

(You have just as big a need for a NUTRI-SPEC LETTER addressing the issue of estrogen damage as you do soy damage. We'll see that you get one in the next few months.)

One of the most common tricks employed by the health food industry in generating propaganda on any subject is shrouding a product with a certain mystique. Mystery and exotica have a tremendous emotional appeal to people -- particularly the most irrational and gullible. Did you ever notice how all of the "healing herbs" are only found in remote parts of the Himalayan Mountains, or in a hidden valley in China, or in one remote, primitive village of South America? Why is it that none of them grow along the highway in Peoria, Illinois?

In that same spirit of magical mystery, a myth of soy miracles has been contrived that attributes low cancer incidence and many other health benefits to the Asian populations who have used soy products as a staple in their diet for thousands of years. This is all a lot of hog wash.

Unlike lentils and a few other legumes that have been used for many thousands of years as a food staple in many parts of the Orient, soybeans have a relatively recent history of use as a food. Furthermore, that use is almost entirely as a condiment, not as a dietary staple. The historical truth on the soybean is that it was designated by the Chinese many thousands of years ago as one of the sacred grains -- but not because it was eaten, but because it was used for its nitrogen fixing properties in soil as part of crop rotation. The soybean was deliberately avoided as a food, as the Chinese knew of its harmful effects.

It took the Chinese thousands of years to stumble across the fermentation process that made soybeans edible (though not necessarily healthful). Even though the fermentation process does eliminate many of the enzyme inhibitors in soy and also the hemagglutinin (which causes red blood cells to clump together), these substances are not eliminated entirely. One way to summarize this is to say that there are a zillion damaging effects from eating soy products, and two of those zillion (the trypsin inhibitors and hemagglutinins) are partially eliminated by fermentation.

You and your patients must understand that, contrary to health food industry propaganda, soy foods a) do not make up a large percentage of Oriental diets, and b) do not have a long history of being consumed in significant quantities in the Orient.

Katz SH. "Food and biocultural evolution: A model for the investigation of modern nutritional problems." Nutritional Anthropology, Allen R. Lis Inc., 1987;p.50.

Here are some other essential facts about soy foods, with references to back them up. Please understand that when we talk about these negative effects of soy foods we are not talking about phenomena that are technically true, but quantitatively not that significant. No -- these damaging effects of soybeans become clinically significant immediately, and with very small intake of soy foods.

The phytates in a soy-based diet (again, contrary to health food industry propaganda) really do interfere with the uptake of important mineral nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, and especially zinc. The soybean has the highest phytate content of any grain or legume. Furthermore, it is highly resistant to many of the phytate-reducing techniques such as long, slow cooking. Asian children who eat significant amounts of tofu and soy bean curd suffer a high incidence of rickets, stunted growth, and other developmental problems.

People who consume tofu and bean curd and soy protein "health bars" as a substitute for meat and dairy products risk not only protein insufficiency, but also severe mineral deficiencies.

Van-Rensburg, et al. "Nutritional status of African populations predisposed to esophageal cancer" Nutrition and Cancer. V4 1983 pp. 206-16.

Moser, PB et al. "Copper, iron, zinc and selenium dietary intake and status of Nepalese lactating women and their breast-fed infants" American Journal of Clinical Nutrition V47 Apr 1988 pp7 29-34.

Harland, et al. "Nutritional status and phytate: Zinc and phytate X calcium: Zinc dietary molar ratios of lacto-ovo-vegetarian Trappist Monks: ten years later" Journal of American Dietetic Association V88 Dec 1988 pp 1562-66.

Tiney, EL. "Proximate composition and mineral and phytate contents of legumes grown in Sudan" Journal of Food Composition and Analysis V2, 1989 pp67-78.

Ologhobo, et al. "Distribution of phosphorous and phytate in some Nigerian varieties of legumes and some effects of processing." Journal of Food Science V49(1)Jan/Feb 1984 pp199-201.

Sandstrom, et al. "Effect of protein level and protein source on zinc absorption in humans." Journal of Nutrition V119(1) Jan 1989 pp48-53.

Tait, Susan. "The availability of minerals in food, with particular reference to iron." J-R-Soc Health V103(2)April 1983 pp 74-77.

Leviton, "Phytate reduction of zinc absorption" J-R-Soc-Health V103(2)April 1983 pp14-15.

Mellanby, Edward. "Experimental rickets: The effect of cereals and their interaction with other factors of diet and environment in producing rickets" Medical Research Council V93 Mar 1925 pp2-65.

Wills, et al. "Phytic acid in nutritional rickets in immigrants" The Lancet April 8, 1972 pp771-73.

The extreme temperatures and pressures that must be used to break down soybeans so that they are palatable, do extreme damage to the nutrients. The proteins are so severely de-natured that they become very difficult to digest and much reduced in their biological activity.

Wallace, GM. "Studies on the processing and properties of soy" J-Sci-FD-Agric V22 Oct 1971 pp526-35.

Furthermore, the extreme processing of soy produces a carcinogen called lysinealanine, plus, reduces the content of the important amino acid cystine, which is already lacking to an extreme in soybeans.

Burke. "Technology of production of edible flowers and protein products from soybeans" FAO Agricultural Services Bulletin 97 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 1992 p 85.

Nitrosamines, which are potent carcinogens are also found in soy protein foods, and are greatly increased during the high temperature drying process.

Rackis, JJ et al. "Quality of plant foods in human nutrition" V35 1985 p 232. Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition

In test animals, soy foods cause enlarged organs, particularly the pancreas and thyroid gland, as well as increased deposition of fat in the liver.

Smith. "Soybeans chemistry and technology" Vol 1. Avi Publishing Co Inc. West Port CT 1972 p.183.

Jenkins, et al. "Nutritional assessment of twelve protein foods/ingredients" Nutritional Research V9(1)Jan 1989 pp 83-92.

One common claim of the health food industry is that soy foods lower cholesterol. Quite the contrary -- in human feeding tests, soy products did not lower cholesterol, and in fact, more often raised cholesterol levels.

Wolfe, BM. "Elevation of VLDL cholesterol during substitution of soy protein for animal protein in diets of hypercholesteremic Canadians" Nutri-Rep-Int V32(5)Nov 1985 pp1057-65.

Are you beginning to get the big idea here? Yet to come (in next month's Letter) is the story on how soy foods:

- cause cancer
- cause premature aging and tissue destruction with rancid fatty acids
- poison you with hexane and other chemical solvents
- cause breast cancer and fibrocystic breasts
- destroy thyroid function
- inhibit brain development in infants
- cause kidney damage
- contribute to Alzheimer's disease
- damage the pancreas
- turn little boys into girls, and little girls into pathological pigs
- cause osteoporosis
- destroy libido

Get off the soy!

Sincerely,

Guy R. Schenker, D.C