

Soy and Child Health

Help your kids discover a variety of tasty and nutritious foods that can help them maintain a healthy weight throughout their life.

Why Soy?

Staying healthy and fit depends on kids choosing a variety of healthy foods and regular physical activity. The MyPyramid for Kids suggests children should eat 2-3 cups per day of fat free or low-fat milk or milk equivalent – depending on their age, 5oz. of protein a day, and two and a half cups of vegetables. Soyfoods offer high-quality protein and can easily help fulfill the meat, dairy, or vegetable requirement - depending on the soyfood chosen. Many fortified soyfoods are also good sources of calcium, vitamin D, fiber, and iron, which are important nutrients for growing children.

Soy-enhanced foods can add variety and nutritive value to children's diets without sacrificing taste. Soyfoods are readily accepted and enjoyed by children and adolescents as tasty alternatives to meat and dairy. In addition, introducing soy early in life may help children develop healthy eating patterns that last a lifetime. Food preferences developed in the infant and toddler years tend to continue throughout childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood. Incorporating soy into meals helps decrease fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and calories, and increase fiber, while still providing children with key vitamins and minerals.

Soy contains many essential nutrients important for growth and development, and works well as a primary source of protein without contributing excess calories.

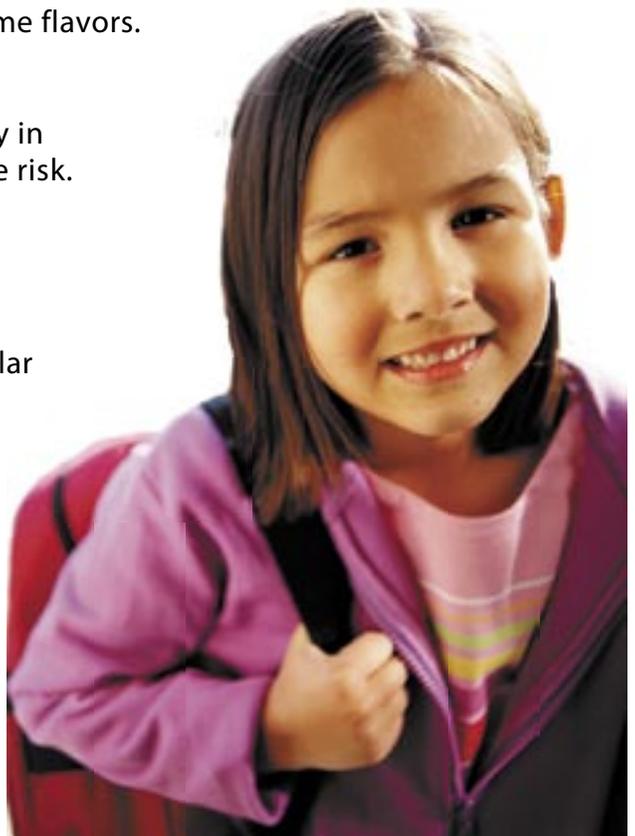
Did you know?

- Soy blends well with other ingredients, even extreme flavors.
- Soy can provide added fiber to kids' diets
- Soy is a cost-effective ingredient
- Offering healthier meals and snacks is a top priority in preventing childhood obesity and reducing disease risk.

Save with kid-friendly soyfoods!

- Serving up 4 soy nuggets in place of 4 chicken nuggets can save ~80 calories.
- On the grill try soy veggie burgers rather than regular hamburgers to save ~80 calories - and add 3 grams of fiber – per burger.
- Fortified soymilk has almost 50 fewer calories than whole milk per serving. Soymilk can also be used to create a creamy, enhanced flavor to existing menu items.
- Save ~70 calories when you replace a beef hotdog with a soy veggie dog.

Daily physical activity is important for children of all ages. The USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 recommends children and adolescents get at least



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one hour of physical activity on most--preferably all--days of the week. Help your children find an activity that they enjoy and participate with them!

Benefits of Soy for Children

In addition to being a tasty alternative in children's meals, soy may also help prevent the development of certain adult diseases. Studies of soy in children and adolescents have shown that soy eases constipation³, lowers high cholesterol^{4,5}, and may even decrease risk of breast cancer later in life⁶.

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A growing number of children have allergies, food intolerances, religious and cultural needs that require special dietary consideration. Most students who are allergic to peanut butter can enjoy soy nut butter. Most students with milk protein allergy, lactose intolerance, or religious/cultural food practices that prohibit milk consumption can get calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, and high-quality protein from fortified soymilk. Tofu and calcium carbonate fortified soymilk have been found to provide comparable amounts of absorbable calcium as cow's milk⁷. There are some children who have allergies to soy, but reactions are typically quite mild and most children outgrow their allergies by the age of three⁸.

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"Consume a variety of foods and beverages packed with nutrients to meet your calorie needs."
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Help kids make smart choices from every food group.

- Make meatless pizzas using soy pepperoni, soy sausage crumbles, soy deli ham or soy bacon. Add soy "cheese-like" slices in place of cow's milk-based cheese.
- Use crumbled tempeh to make sloppy Joes, tacos or burritos.
- Make protein-rich smoothies with tofu, soymilk and a variety of fruits.
- Make homemade trail mix by mixing honey-roasted soy nuts and chocolate-covered soy nuts in with the whole-grain cereal, raisins and other dried fruit.
- Add fortified soymilk containing calcium, vitamin A, vitamin D, and high-quality protein to the diets of children who do not drink cow's milk.
- Spread soy nut butter on whole wheat bread or celery, in place of peanut butter
- Use soyfoods such as tofu, tempeh, miso, soymilk, and edamame as teaching tools to introduce children to different cultural eating and lifestyle practices.

⁴J Pediatr. July 1993, 123(1):30-4.

⁵J Am Coll Nutr. June 1992, Suppl:69S-73S.

⁶Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention. 2001, Vol 10: 483-488.

⁷The Soy Connection. 2005; 13(4). Included in the JADA. Oct2005.

⁸Allergy 2000;55:515-521.