

Soy and Heart Health

Protect Your Heart Early Against Disease: Soy protein not only lowers blood cholesterol, but has been found to contribute to increasing good cholesterol (HDL) and lowering triglyceride levels.

Why Soy?

To help your heart stay healthy, exercise regularly, eat more fruits and vegetables, and choose foods lower in saturated fat, total fat, and cholesterol. Soyfoods are low in saturated fat, are cholesterol-free, and contain high-quality protein, essential fatty acids, dietary fiber, and numerous other nutrients. As part of a healthy diet, soyfoods can replace less healthy foods that are high in saturated fat and cholesterol, thus enhancing their impact on cholesterol lowering. Incorporating plant-based soyfoods into the diet may also improve blood pressure and other coronary heart disease risk factors. Check the label for sodium content to stay within healthy limits.

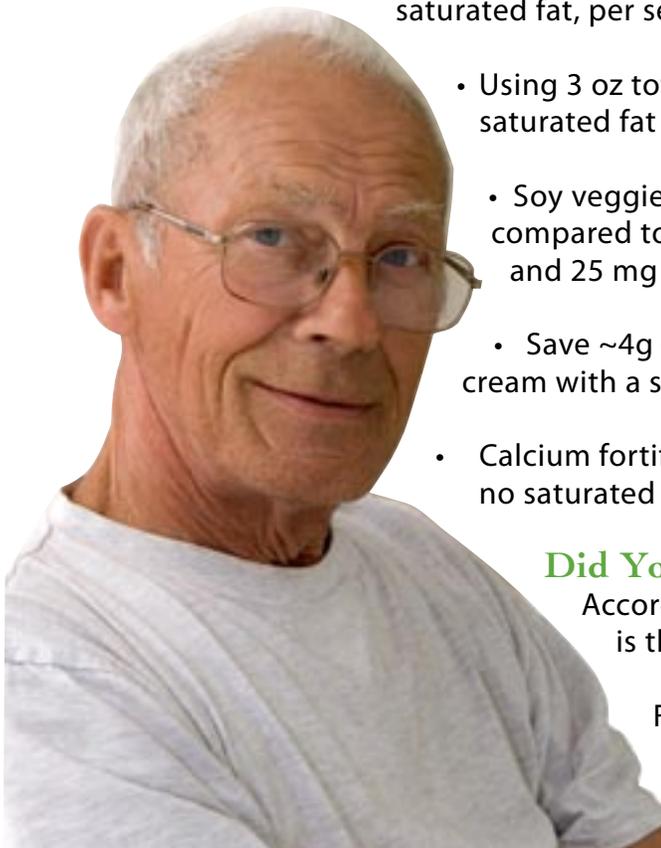
Soy can help you save calories, fat, and cholesterol. Try these simple suggestions:

- Replace a 1 oz snack bag potato chips or 1 oz peanuts with 1 oz of roasted soy nuts and save about 25- 40 calories and 2-3 g saturated fat.
- Most soy yogurts have no saturated fat or cholesterol compared to dairy yogurts.
- Frozen soy desserts offer all the flavor – but less than one gram of saturated fat – compared to regular ice cream, which may contain close to 5g saturated fat, per serving.
- Using 3 oz tofu instead of 3 oz of beef steak saves close to 6g saturated fat and 53mg cholesterol.
- Soy veggie dogs have no saturated fat or cholesterol compared to beef franks that have almost 6g saturated fat and 25 mg cholesterol.
- Save ~4g of saturated fat by replacing one serving of ice-cream with a serving of a frozen soy treat.
- Calcium fortified soymilk contains no cholesterol and little to no saturated fat.

Did You Know?

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S..

FDA Approved Health Claims related to soy include:
"25 grams of soy protein a day, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease."



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Benefits of Soy for Heart Health

Soyfoods, containing no or low amounts of saturated fat, can help reduce LDL cholesterol. Research has shown that consuming a diet low in saturated fat, in conjunction with your doctor-prescribed therapies (i.e. statins) can significantly reduce LDL cholesterol.¹ This underscores the importance of diet therapy in treating coronary heart disease and may help you avoid the need to increase doses of expensive prescription drugs that often cause unwelcome side effects. Besides reducing blood cholesterol, soy has been shown to raise HDL cholesterol, lower triglycerides and blood pressure and increase blood vessel elasticity.^{2,3,4}

Displacing higher-saturated fat foods with soyfoods, which are high in good unsaturated fatty acids, offers additional coronary advantages. The American Heart Association reports that soyfoods should be considered beneficial because of their high content of polyunsaturated fats, fiber, vitamins, minerals and low content of saturated fat and no cholesterol.⁵ In addition, soy protein may help to improve blood vessel elasticity—a measure of how “hardened” your vessels are. Having blood vessels that are less “elastic” is considered a major risk factor for coronary heart disease. If you are on a low-sodium diet stick to unprocessed soyfoods such as tofu, edamame (green, raw soybeans), dry soybeans (rehydrated/cooked), and unsalted soy nuts.

Find your balance between food and physical activity.

In addition to a heart-healthy diet, physical activity plays a key role in keeping your weight at a healthy number, which can help to decrease your risk for CHD. At least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week can help keep your heart healthy—and keep you feeling your best.

Eat a variety of soyfoods from each food group to achieve optimal benefits.

Replace high-calorie, high-saturated fat meats with soy meat-alternatives and soy/meat blends:

- Pack a pita with soy chicken-style strips, spinach leaves and fresh veggies.
- Make meatloaf or meatballs with soy crumbles instead of ground beef.
- Grill kabobs made with tempeh or tofu chunks, vegetables, and pineapple chunks.

Vary your veggies...

- Steamed edamame (green sweet soybeans) is an excellent, easy snack
- Serve steamed edamame in the shell as an appetizer at your next party.
- Accessorize your salad with soy nuts and/or steamed edamame.

Replace higher-saturated fat dairy...

- Add calcium fortified soymilk or tofu to fruit smoothies.
- Spread flavored soy cream cheese on bagels or English muffins.
- Substitute soy “cheese-like” slices for cow’s milk-based cheese

(Endnotes)

¹ *Am J Clin Nutr* 2005; 8:380-387.

² Agency for Health Research Quality. August 2005. <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/soytp.htm>.

³ *J Nutr*. 2002;132:566S-569S.

⁴ *Annals of Int Med*. 2005;143(1):1-9.

⁵ *Circulation*. 2006;113(1): 1-12.