



# Truth about Soya

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The image of Soya as a wonder bean has over the last few years been increasingly drip fed to the media, nutritionists, health journals, and the NHS by scientists and various 'health' experts and has thus taken a hold in the consciousness of the alternative health world as a miracle food of the 21st century.

We have all been gradually buying into the idea that soya can balance our hormones, prevent osteoporosis, protect against breast cancer and that it is a perfect replacement for cows milk for vegans and anyone with a dairy allergy.

But is this miracle food all that it is cracked up to be? Where is the information coming from? Who are the experts and scientists purporting this so-called wonder bean as a cure all? Is it really true, as the latest independent research suggests that instead of being a health food, it is actually very toxic to the body and is creating a multitude of health problems for many people in the western world. We have been led to believe the reason the Chinese accrue great longevity and Japanese women sail through the menopause without any ill effects is due to their soya rich diet.

Soya or soy as it is called in the rest of the world has been making a name for itself because it is rich in phytoestrogens or isoflavones, which have an apparent ability to balance hormones. This has been great news for women transiting through the menopause and worried about the side effects of HRT.

But far from balancing hormone levels, isoflavones and other toxic substances (see below) found in soya can actually disrupt the endocrine system leading to problems with fertility, thyroid disorders, early onset of puberty in children, menstrual disorders and a depletion of vital nutrients such as zinc, iodine and calcium.

In fact, the over consumption of soya has led to an epidemic of thyroid problems in the west all due to an inability to understand the true nature of the Japanese diet; of what the health benefits really are and the health problems associated with processing foods (soya) in the wrong way.

## Here are the facts:

It has been well known in the Australian farming industry since as far back as the 1940's that infertility levels rose when sheep consumed clover. The syndrome has even been labelled as 'Clover Disease'. Clover is very high in isoflavones, just like soya, causing hormone-disrupting effects on the sheep. One of the isoflavones, genistein, inhibits an enzyme important for the synthesis of testosterone.

Japanese monks have been known to dampen their libido by increasing their soya intake and Japanese women give it to their husbands to acquire the same effect. Again it has been known for at least 1/2 century that phytoestrogens can make animals infertile. Just ask any bird breeder about soya. They avoid it for exactly the same reasons.

Phytoestrogens are known as endocrine disrupters. Another worrying factor is that babies fed soya based milk formulas are developing problems with premature sexual development due to upsetting the baby's own natural hormonal balance. Professor Jill Schneider from Lehigh University in Pennsylvania discovered in studies involving rats that were fed soya developed the onset of puberty far earlier than normal. For babies fed soya formulas, as well as increased risk of harm to the child's future sexual development and reproductive health, they are also being exposed to the risk of thyroid disease such as hypothyroidism.

One of my students told me about her son being born with genital malformation after we were discussing why soya is not as nutritious as we have been led to believe. She consumed a lot of soya during her pregnancy thinking it would be benefiting her health.