



Mike Fitzpatrick, a toxicologist has made the link between drinking 2 glasses of soya milk a day to ingesting 2 birth control pills a day. Consuming the same amount can also alter menstrual cycles in women.

One of the biggest concerns is the effect that soya has on the thyroid. Over 8 years ago now, at the college where I studied to be a nutritionist, it was a well-known fact that Soya has a depleting effect on the body, especially of iodine (important for the health of the thyroid) and so it was never a recommendation to any of our clients. We were also taught how it's high levels of aluminium were toxic to the body (due to the aluminium vats that soya milk is made in) and so I am always surprised when I hear other people in my field of work promoting this product.

Japanese researchers have known for the last 50 years that the intake of soya causes enlargement of the thyroid and suppressed thyroid function. Theodore Kay of the Kyoto University Faculty of Medicine concluded in 1988 that;

‘Thyroid enlargement in rats and humans especially children and women, fed with soybeans has been known for half a century.’

But I hear you all say, how is it that the Japanese diet is the best in the world and they consume lots of soya but they don't suffer the same effects?

Well, for one, there are a number of inaccuracies involving the Japanese diet, which have lead people to believe the above statement.

1. The Japanese don't eat as much soya as we have been lead to believe. Their intake is approx 7-8gms a day. The poorer the Asians the more soya they consume.
2. The soya bean has to go through a number of processes before it is deemed edible for human consumption. This well known fact is why in Asia the beans are always cooked with seaweed, which helps to break down the fibres and makes it easier to assimilate.
3. They consume lots of seaweed, which is rich in iodine and thus replace the iodine levels depleted.
4. They don't eat as much of the hormone disrupting soya products such as tofu and milk. They consume more miso, tempeh, and tamari, which are fermented soya, as well as bean sprouts. The fermenting and sprouting process reduces the isoflavones and mineral binding substances such as phytic acid and oxalic acid. This is another problem with soya. It is high in phytic and oxalic acid, which blocks the uptake of vital minerals such as zinc and calcium. Another reason for menopausal women to avoid soya and find a better way of supplementing their diet with calcium.
5. And lastly, even though I, and many nutritionists believe

the Japanese diet is one of the best in the world, it is not perfect. High sodium levels, mercury in raw fish, increased intake of unfermented soya along with other factors attributable to the modern age has led to increased rates of stomach, pancreas, liver and thyroid cancers.

Simply drinking pure soya milk is exposing people to high levels of unnatural hormones and aluminium and the most vulnerable are menopausal women and babies, the ones who are targeted by advertising.

75% or more of processed food containing vegetable oil is actually soya oil and due to its high demand, the left over product (protein) needs a market. The soya bean is America's 3rd largest crop. I leave you to draw your own conclusions.

When studies are made by western scientists claiming the benefits of soya in promoting health, there is rarely a clear definition of the type of soya used. A study involving 143,000 Japanese women concluded that incidences of breast cancer were reduced when soya was included in the diet. But the type of soya that was used wasn't, tofu or milk, it was miso. When tofu was introduced into the diet, breast cancer rates increased.

### **Soya alternatives**

If you are consuming a lot of soya and are worried about what to replace it with try increasing your intake of nuts, seeds, dark green leafy vegetables and seaweed which are rich in calcium, protein, zinc, essential fatty acids, iron and B vitamins. In fact, all the nutrients that soya purports to contain, but in a more absorbable form. The seaweed will also replace the iodine levels that have been depleted. The essential fatty acid Omega 3 which is found in high levels in raw fish in the Japanese diet is the key ingredient to balancing hormones in the body, not soya. Ask any nutritionist what the super foods of the Japanese diet are and they will mention, seaweed, uncontaminated raw fish, fresh vegetables and bean sprouts.

Use rice milk to replace soya milk or make your own. Take a handful of soaked almonds, 2 dates and a cup of water. Whiz together in a blender for 3 minutes and you have your own raw highly nutritious fresh milk.

Recommended reading:

The Whole Soy Story by DR Kaayla.T. Daniel  
Lucy Pook, Nutritionist, Naturopath, Health journalist, Raw chocolate chef lucy.pook@ntlworld.com  
01272 232862