Soy Allergy Diet

The only proven treatment for a person with food allergies is to avoid all of the food(s) that cause an allergic reaction. Soy allergy is one of the top 8 food allergies in the United States.

The treatment for soy allergy is to remove all soy protein from the diet. Food labels must be carefully read, as soybeans are used in a large number of commercial foods. Also, products that contain soy are becoming more widespread. Soybeans are used in making flours, milks, nuts, and oils. The soybeans may be powdered, granulated, textured, and coarsely or finely ground.

The Food Allergen and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 require that goods must list ingredients by their common names for the top 8 allergenic foods. The top 8 allergenic foods in the United States are eggs, milk, soy, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish. **However, it is still very important to read labels of all food purchased and avoid forms of soy protein.**

Label ingredients which may show the presence of soy protein.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edamame</th>
<th>Soy nuts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meats containing “vegetable protein” or “textureized vegetable protein”</td>
<td>Soy milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrolyzed vegetable protein</td>
<td>Soy sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinnoko flour</td>
<td>Shoyu sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyodofu (freeze-dried tofu)</td>
<td>Soy sprouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miso</td>
<td>Soy yogurt/cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natto</td>
<td>Supro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okara (soy pulp)</td>
<td>Tamari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy beans</td>
<td>Tempeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy concentrate</td>
<td>Teriyaki sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy curds</td>
<td>Textured soy protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy flour</td>
<td>Textured vegetable protein (TVP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy granules</td>
<td>Tofu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy grits</td>
<td>Yakidofu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy flour</td>
<td>Yuba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Studies show that most soy allergic people may safely eat **soybean oil** (not cold pressed, expeller processed or extruded oil) and **soy lecithin**. Ask your doctor or dietitian if you need to avoid these.
Label ingredients which **may** contain soy protein.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetable broth</th>
<th>Vegetable gum</th>
<th>Vegetable starch</th>
<th>Asian foods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Can Eat**  
- Vegetable broth  
- Vegetable gum  
- Vegetable starch  
- Asian foods

**Avoid**

**Beverages**  
- Cow’s milk; coffee; tea; fruit juices; carbonated beverages; vegetable juices.
- Coffee substitutes; drink mixes; non-dairy creamers (check labels); soymilk; milk substitutes containing soy.

**Bread**  
- Breads, crackers, rolls, waffles, and pancakes that do not contain soy flour or soy products.
- Commercial baked goods containing soybean flour or soy nuts. Check labels on breads, breading, crackers, rolls, stuffings, pancakes, waffles, etc.

**Cereal**  
- Single grain hot cereals such as oatmeal or cream of wheat; commercial cereals that do not contain soy.
- Processed breakfast cereals that contain soy. Many high protein cereals contain soy. Read labels carefully.

**Dessert**  
- Homemade desserts including: ice cream, pastries, puddings, pies, cakes, doughnuts, frostings, sauces, toppings and cookies all made without soy products.
- Many commercial desserts including: cakes, dumplings, ice cream, ice cream cones, pies, puddings, pastries, frostings, doughnuts, sauces, cookies, creamy gelatin desserts and whipped toppings that contain soy.

**Fats and oils**  
- Butter; margarine; all vegetable oils, most vegetable sprays.
- Fats containing soy protein (lecithin and oil are ok)

**Fruits**  
- Fresh, cooked, canned, or dried fruits.
- Fruits in fritter, cobblers, and dumplings containing soy; fruits in sauces with soy.

**Meat and meat substitutes**  
- Plain meats; all cheeses except those noted; plain eggs; all nuts except for soy nuts.
- Textured vegetable protein; meat extenders; soy nuts. Commercial frozen meat patties, hamburger extenders, lunch meats, sausage, meat loaf and some processed cheeses may contain soy. Soy beans/Edamame, soy cheese, soy yogurt.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Can Eat</strong></th>
<th><strong>Avoid</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potato or pasta</td>
<td>Potatoes; rice; soy-free noodles, and soy-free pastas.</td>
<td>Soy containing macaroni, noodles, spaghetti, or other pasta; commercial pasta in sauces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salads and salad dressings</td>
<td>Fresh fruits and vegetables. Soy-free salad dressings.</td>
<td>Commercial salad dressings that contain soy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonings</td>
<td>Pure spices and herbs.</td>
<td>Mixed spices containing soy, soy sauce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soups</td>
<td>Homemade soups; noodle soups made with soy-free noodles.</td>
<td>Many commercial soups, canned and dry mixes, and noodle soups; miso soup; soups containing tofu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets</td>
<td>All sugars; honey, jam, jelly and syrups.</td>
<td>Soy sprouts. Commercially prepared vegetables that are breaded or contain soy sauce; canned or frozen Asian style vegetables; canned and frozen vegetables in any kind of sauce that contains soy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables prepared without soy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples of soy used in foods**

- Asian cuisine, including Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Lao, and Korean often contains soy.
- Hamburgers and veggie burgers served at some restaurants, fast food chains, and school lunch programs often contain soy protein.
- Veggie burgers and meat substitutes, such as Boca®, Garden®, and Morningstar Farms® products contain soy protein.
- Prepackaged meatloaves and meats with stuffing may contain soy.
- Prefried products, purchased in the store or served at a restaurant, are often fried in vegetable oils that have previously been used to fry foods containing soybean flour or soybean protein.
- Soybean flour is often mixed with other flours in commercial products.
- Fortified texturized soybeans are often used in vegetarian dishes.
- Tofu is made from soybean curd.
- The Japanese product “miso” is a paste made from crushed soy, rice, barley, or plum, mixed with salt and water, and then fermented.
- “Natto” is barley miso with ginger added.

**Substitutions and Tips**

- Lecithin, a type of fat, is mostly derived from either soybeans or eggs. If the lecithin is fairly pure, there is little chance it will contain any soy protein. Lecithin is an emulsifying agent used in many bakery products, and mixes, and is sold as a liquid or spray for oiling cooking pans. Manufacturers are not required to list the source of the lecithin on the label of their products. Often they change the source of the lecithin from egg yolk to soy. It depends on what is economical at the time.
- It is unlikely that a person allergic to soy protein will react to soy oil.
In cooking, you can use substitutes for soybean products

- Soy flour – use wheat, rice, oat, barley, or potato flour.
- Soybean milk – use cow’s milk, rice or potato milk or any formula that does not contain soy.
- Soy miso – use barley, plum or rice miso.
- Soy sauce – use pure concentrated beef or chicken broth or flavored salts.

Tips to Follow to Prevent an Allergic Reaction:

- Avoid foods that cause a reaction. Sometimes just touching foods can cause a severe reaction.
- Read the ingredients lists on food labels to make sure allergy-causing foods are present. **Read the list even if you have had the product before. Ingredients may change.**
- If you are traveling, bring along some of your own special foods.
- When eating out, always ask restaurant staff about ingredients in food and how it was prepared. Ask about oils and the foods fried in them to avoid cross contamination.
- Contact food companies if you are unsure of any ingredient on the label.
- For infants, elemental formulas or formulas with altered protein should prevent food reactions. Discuss the various formula options with your doctor or dietitian. Do not assume products labeled “hypoallergenic” will not cause a reaction.

Other Resources

**Food Allergy Association of Wisconsin** - [www.foodallergywis.org](http://www.foodallergywis.org) or 608-575-9535  
Food Allergy Research and Education – [http://www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org) or 1-800-929-4040  
Kids with Food Allergies-[http://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org](http://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org) or 215-230-5394 (a great resource for webinars, product information and updates, recipes and forums)  

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [http://www.niaid.nih.gov/topics/foodallergy](http://www.niaid.nih.gov/topics/foodallergy)

Teach Back:

What is the most important thing you learned from this handout?

What changes will you make in your diet/lifestyle, based on what you learned today?

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at [www.uwhealth.org/nutrition](http://www.uwhealth.org/nutrition)

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children’s Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500.**

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: **(608) 287-2770**

The Spanish version of this *Health Facts for You* is #388

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