



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S

# FRESH CONVERSATIONS

November 2019  
Volume 6, Number 11

A Healthy Living Newsletter for Seniors

## Fresh News About Soyfoods

Plant-based eating is one of today's hottest food trends and this includes foods from soybeans, or soyfoods. Soyfoods offer health benefits that set them apart from other protein choices.

**Complete protein.** Not only is the soybean higher in protein than other beans (35% vs. 27%), but soy protein is also a complete protein, which means that it contains all the essential amino acids in amounts needed by the body.

**Muscle function.** Older adults have increased protein needs, in order to slow or prevent the muscle loss that naturally occurs with aging. Soyfoods are affordable and provide high-quality protein.

**Heart health.** Soy beans are rich in fiber, low in saturated fat, high in polyunsaturated fat, and have no cholesterol. Soybeans are one of the few good sources of both essential fatty acids—omega-6 and omega-3.

**Diabetes.** Research has shown that soyfoods can help people manage their diabetes. Soybeans are lower in carbohydrate compared to other beans. And common soyfoods, like tofu, are also low in carbohydrate.

Soyfoods may not be a part of your diet now, but it's never too late to start... keep reading!

For more information on the health benefits of soy, visit the [Soy Nutrition Institute](#) and [The Soyfoods Council](#), an affiliate of the Iowa Soybean Association.

**One half-cup serving of canned black soybeans provides 120 calories, 11 grams of protein, 8 grams of carbohydrate, 7 grams of fiber and 6 grams of fat (1 gram saturated fat).**

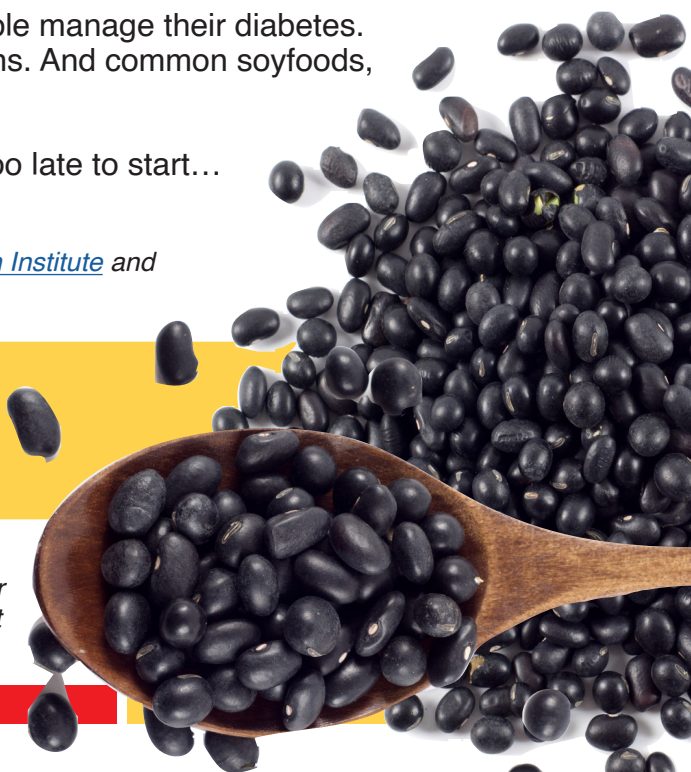
*Linda Funk contributed information for this newsletter. She is the Executive Director for [The Soyfoods Council](#). In addition to a passion for travel, Linda enjoys sewing, gardening and spending time with her great nieces and nephew.*



### Tofu for you!

Learn more about  
this versatile  
soyfood inside.

(Pictured: Water-  
packed tofu)





**Tasty health tip:** Combine silken tofu with Greek yogurt to replace cream cheese and mayonnaise in every day recipes. One half-cup serving of tofu provides 11 grams of protein.

## Soyfoods: Sooo Good and Good for You

For a food that's been around for thousands of years, it's amazing to see how many "new" soyfoods are on the grocery shelves today. Just take a close look as you walk down almost every supermarket aisle and you'll see soy, in a flavor or form that matches your needs.

### Tofu

OK, maybe you didn't grow up eating tofu. But don't let that stop you from enjoying this nutritious, versatile food.

Tofu plays well with others because of its adaptable texture and mild nutty bland flavor. It's the ultimate fusion food.

But there's no need to be fancy. This winter, try cutting extra firm tofu into tiny cubes to add to chicken noodle or another favorite soup. Or blend soft or silken tofu with your best cream soup, like Butternut Squash or Cream of Broccoli.

Ready to try it? The most important question to ask is, "What do I want my tofu to do—keep its shape (water-packed) or blend in (silken)?"

### **Water-packed Tofu:**

- Ideal for entrees and recipes when tofu should maintain a shape and texture
- Comes in soft, firm and extra firm textures; use firmer textures for stir-fry
- Press tofu with a towel to remove excess water and help it absorb other flavors

### **Silken Tofu:**

- Has light, fluffy and cream-like qualities
- Best for smoothies, dressings, dips and desserts
- Packaged in a small boxes and shelf stable until opened
- Comes in soft, firm and extra firm consistencies

### Edamame

Edamame (fresh green soybeans) may have a funny name but it's practically the perfect vegetable. It looks like a tiny lima bean, only greener. It's packed with protein and has a pleasant consistency.

**How do you eat it?** Add edamame to your favorite vegetable soup or mix with other veggies. Toss some into green salads or stir into a combination bean salad. Stir into stir fry. Or just set out for snacking, as the Japanese do.

**In the pod or shelled?** Either one. The pod itself is not edible. Simply slit the side of the cooked pod and pop the beans in your mouth. Great for snacking!

Shelled edamame has already been taken out of the pod. It comes packaged and ready to use. Most of the time you will find both shelled and in-the-pod edamame in the frozen vegetable section of supermarket.

**In addition to protein, a half-cup of edamame provides 9 grams of fiber. That's a bunch! Four slices of whole wheat bread have 8 grams.**

## Soy Crumbles and TSP (Textured Soy Protein)

How many of your everyday recipes call for ground beef? And how many of those recipes could be better for you if they had fewer calories and saturated fat?

Then take a look in the frozen meat or frozen plant protein section of the supermarket and you'll find soy crumbles, a super-convenient form of textured soy protein or TSP. In addition to the nutrition benefits, the crumbles are real timesavers—already browned and crumbled and ready to add to spaghetti sauce, casseroles, Sloppy Joes, etc.

TSP also comes in a dry form, usually found in the health foods section. Think of TSP as meat you can keep on the shelf—always handy, ready to add to recipes, and no worries about refrigeration or food safety.



**TSP or TVP? Textured Soy Protein or Textured Vegetable Protein are one in the same, just different names.**

**Shelf-stable TSP granules are a fiber-rich, zero-fat food that offers approximately 11 grams of soy protein per one-quarter cup serving.**



## Soyfoods are budget-friendly.

Soyfoods are economical and simple to prepare. For example, replacing 25% to 50% of the ground meat in recipes with textured soy protein (TSP) or textured vegetable protein (TVP™) can stretch a food budget without sacrificing flavor, texture or convenience.

## What about soymilk?

According to the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, “Soy beverages fortified with calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin D, are included as part of the dairy group because they are similar to milk, based on nutrient composition and in their use in meals.”

## Take Action Corner

**This month I will...**

---

---

---

Oh, Soy! Answers (page 4)  
1. Edamame, 2. Tofu, 3. Protein, 4. Heart, 5. Soyfoods, 6. Muscle, 7. Affordable

# Oh, Soy!

Decode the following words related to this month's newsletter.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
12	5	19	10	3	21	17	23	14	24	2	26	15

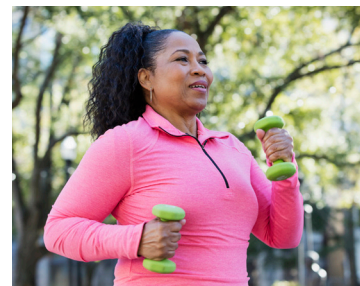
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
22	7	25	9	1	18	11	6	13	20	4	16	8

- 3 10 12 15 12 15 3
- 11 7 21 6
- 25 1 7 11 3 14 22
- 23 3 12 1 11
- 18 7 16 21 7 7 10 18
- 15 6 18 19 26 3
- 12 21 21 7 1 10 12 5 26 3

## Exercise is Good for Your Brain

Physical activity releases endorphins, which are brain chemicals that help you feel good, and they promote nerve cell growth. Exercise increases blood circulation, including in the brain, providing oxygen-rich blood to feed brain cells.

**Avoid the “winter blues.”** Exercising for as little as 30 minutes per day can be an effective natural antidepressant. Duke University compared exercise to antidepressant medication among 156 older adults with major depressive disorder. Both were found effective. But after 10 months, those who exercised were 50% less likely to be depressed.



**Can't exercise for 30 minutes? Try 10-minute bursts of activity throughout the day.**

### Avoid brain atrophy.

Even healthy older adults can experience brain atrophy or “shrinkage” in gray matter or brain volume. Can you do anything about it?

Meditation may help and make sure you “keep moving” this winter. Regular physical activity, at least 30 minutes per day most days of the week, can slow down age-related declines in the brain.

*Adapted from “Ask the Doctor” by Dr. Jonathan Wanagat, Division of Geriatrics. UCLA Healthy Years newsletter, volume HY 18H*

## Recipe of the Month



Edamame and Corn Salad

Recipe and photo courtesy of [The Soyfoods Council](#)

### SERVINGS: 6

### INGREDIENTS

- 1½ c frozen edamame
- 1½ c. frozen corn
- ½ c. chopped red bell pepper
- 2 T. balsamic vinegar
- 2 T. cider vinegar
- 1 T. brown sugar
- ½ t. onion powder
- 1 clove garlic, minced (1/8 tsp garlic powder)

### DIRECTIONS

Combine vinegars, sugar and spices. Warm slightly in microwave until sugar is dissolved. Thaw edamame and corn (drain water). In a bowl, combine all ingredients. Cover and chill, stirring once. Use as-is for a relish or place atop bed of lettuce to serve as salad.

### BONUS

Add 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin for some extra flavor! Use bottled balsamic or red wine vinegar dressing.



Program developed by Iowa Department of Public Health in partnership with Iowa Department of Human Services and Department on Aging. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—SNAP. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.