

Breakthrough common nutrition myths, see what's trending, catch up on latest research, and get great tips from our team of Registered Dietitians.

MYTH

Superfoods will keep you super-healthy.

FACT

Sorry! No food has superpowers to keep you healthy on its own. Even if a food is bursting with a beneficial nutrient, your body needs more than that to be healthy. Unfortunately, there's no "superfood" definition, and the term is sometimes used to market trendy, expensive foods, like goji berries and açai berries, that don't always live up to their superior claims. In fact, some basic foods that aren't called "super", such as apples, can be equally nutritious, less costly, and more widely available. Enjoying a diet that is rich in a variety of healthy foods, not just the trendiest, is key to good health.



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

1 in 9 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer

Lifestyle Factors

- You have a higher risk of developing cancer if you are overweight.
- Having one or more drinks per day is associated with a slight increase in breast cancer risk.
- Eating well will help against developing cancer – eat lots of veggies and fruit, lots of fibre, and little fat and sugar. Red meat and processed meat increase your risk of cancer.
- Regular physical activity helps protect against cancer.



About one-third of all cancers can be prevented by eating well, being active and maintaining a healthy body weight.

What about the controversy with soy foods and breast cancer?

Foods produced with soy (ie. veggie burgers, tempeh, tofu, miso, soy flour, etc.), contain isoflavones, which are a phytochemical (plant chemical) similar to estrogen. There is concern that these "estrogen-like" plant compounds will result in an increased risk of breast cancer. The research regarding these concerns mainly comes from studies on mice and rats. However, soy is metabolized differently in humans than it is in rodents. Additionally, not all animal studies have shown negative effects.

Another interesting fact is that isoflavones also have anti-estrogen properties. They bind to estrogen receptors, blocking natural estrogen. Since isoflavones are weaker than natural estrogen, they actually reduce the effects of estrogen. The isoflavones also encourage the production of a protein, which binds to estrogen in the blood, further reducing the binding ability of estrogen to its receptors. Also, isoflavones have anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties, which can reduce cancer growth.

To date, human studies examining the effects of soy on breast cancer have been observational in nature. Research on healthy women and breast cancer survivors have shown either no adverse relationship between soy exposure and breast cancer, or a protective effect.

The majority of human studies report that soy is likely safe for breast cancer survivors when consumed in amounts found in a typical Asian diet (3 servings/d). However, it is recommended to avoid the use of soy supplements, as less is known about the health effects of these isolated forms.

Bottom Line: Despite mixed information in animal studies on breast cancer and supplement use, studies in humans have not shown harm from eating soy foods. Moderate intake of soy foods appears to be safe for breast cancer survivors and the general population, and may even lower breast cancer risk. It is prudent to avoid soy supplements, until further research is done.

To learn more about our fight against breast cancer and how you can show your support by taking action against this disease, go to

<http://www.cancer.ca/en/get-involved/events-and-participation/find-an-event-near-you/breast-cancer-awareness-month-on/?region=on#ixzz4LlnNnn3o>

References:

<http://www.cancer.ca>

PEN- Allison Duncan, *Soy and Breast Cancer: What Dietitians Need to Know*

Talk to your Registered Dietitian for more information.

Recipe of the Month

Pineapple Tofu Power Smoothie

(Kate Park, RD) Makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 1 block of soft tofu
- 1 banana
- 1 cup low fat milk (regular or almond)
- 1.5 cups pineapple
- 2 tbsp ground flax
- 1 cup loosely packed spinach

Instructions

- 1) Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.

