

# SOY'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE MENOPAUSAL TRANSITION

The menopause transition marks a period of significant health changes for women, largely driven by declining estrogen levels. This hormonal shift can lead to a variety of chronic disease risk factors and undesirable symptoms, impacting overall health and well-being in unique ways for each individual.

## Soy's Role in Symptom Management and Long-Term Health

Research suggests that isoflavone-rich soy foods such as tofu, tempeh, edamame, roasted soybeans, and soy milk may help support women through the menopause transition by addressing common symptoms and long-term health risks.



### Hot Flashes

Women experiencing menopause may benefit from eating more soy foods because soy isoflavones may help reduce both the frequency and severity of hot flashes.

A systematic review and meta-analysis of 36 studies<sup>1</sup> found that, in comparison to placebo groups, menopausal women consuming 30–80mg of soy isoflavones daily experienced:



Fewer hot flashes



Reduction in hot flash severity

Evidence suggests that genistein—a specific type of isoflavone naturally found soy foods like tofu or tempeh—may play an important role in helping reduce hot flashes.

### Skin Health

Emerging research also supports a connection between soy food intake and skin health in postmenopausal women.

In a 6-month clinical trial<sup>2</sup> involving 159 postmenopausal women, those who consumed 30 grams of soy protein daily (which included 50 mg of isoflavones) experienced:



Reduced wrinkle depth



Decreased skin pigmentation



Improved skin hydration

### Heart Health

Due to declining estrogen levels, menopausal women face an increased risk of heart disease. Soy foods have been widely studied for their role in reducing the risk of heart disease.

Soy protein carries a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized health claim related to its ability to lower blood cholesterol levels, which states that 25 grams of soy protein a day, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease.<sup>3</sup>

Evidence also suggests that, in postmenopausal women, isoflavones may improve endothelial function, the thin layer of cells that line blood vessels.<sup>4</sup>

## Osteoporosis

Menopausal women also face an increased risk of osteoporosis due to declining estrogen levels.

Emerging research suggests that soy foods, likely due to their isoflavone content, may support bone health.

Observational studies have reported that soy intake is associated with a reduced risk of fractures among women, and findings from clinical trials indicate that soy consumption is linked to decreased bone resorption.<sup>5,6</sup>

More research is needed before soy foods can be recommended for bone health solely due to their isoflavone content. However, soy foods contain nutrients that support bone health including calcium (found in fortified soy milk and calcium-set tofu) and protein.



For recipe inspiration to support your patients' nutritional needs during menopause, visit [soyconnection.com/recipes](https://soyconnection.com/recipes).

## HOW TO ENJOY SOY

	Serving Size	Calories	Protein (g)	Isoflavones (mg)
Dry roasted soybeans	1/4 cup	100	10	78
Soybeans, green, cooked (edamame)	1/2 cup	100	10	50
Soy milk, unsweetened, fortified	1 cup	80	7	43
Tofu	3 oz	90	9	25
Tempeh	3 oz	160	18	53
Soy yogurt	3/4 cup	110	7	56
Soy nut butter	1 Tbsp	100	3	n/a

## REFERENCES

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