University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Patient Information

Nutrition and Dietetics

Allergy - Soya free diet

This leaflet provides dietary information and helpful tips on how to avoid soya. Before starting a soya free diet, you should discuss with your doctor.

Some individuals may develop an intolerance to the protein in soya. To prevent symptoms, it is important to remove all soya and foods containing it from your diet.

Removing soya from your diet does not put you at nutritional risk. However, soya is present in a wide number of products and not eating these will affect the variety of your diet. If your reactions to soya have been severe and immediate, such as lip swelling, an immediate rash or sickness, you should not reintroduce soya into your diet without first talking to your doctor or dietitian.

If you have removed soya as a trial but have found no improvement after 2 weeks, try slowly reintroducing soya back into your diet.

How can you tell if a food contains soya?

Food labelling

In the UK and European Union (EU), all pre-packaged foods, including alcoholic drinks, must clearly show on the label if they contain any of the 14 major allergens. These must be highlighted in the ingredients list (in bold,

italics, underlined or a different colour). This includes **soybeans** (soya).

It is important to note that food manufacturers are not required to use a warning statement about allergens. Therefore, **always** check the ingredients list carefully.

Soya is added to a wide range of manufactured products. You will have to check the ingredient list on **all** pre-packaged foods to see if soya is present.

Words to look for on labels

When checking ingredient lists, watch for the following terms that indicate the presence of soya:

- **Soy/soya**
- Soya protein isolate
- Soya protein / soya protein products
- Soya albumin
- Soya bean
- Soya flour
- Soya lecithin (E322)*
- Soya milk
- Soya oil *
- Miso
- Tempeh
- Tofu
- Edamame beans
- Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)
- Hydrolysed Vegetable Protein (HVP)

*Note: You may be able to tolerate soya lecithin and refined soya oil but not unrefined soya oil. Ask your dietitian for specific advise about these ingredients.

Additional tips

- **Check labels regularly:** Ingredients in manufactured foods can change regularly, so it's important to check product labels every time you purchase.
- **Medicines and supplements:** Make sure any medicines, vitamin or mineral supplements you use are free from soya.

Suitable bread options

Most commercially prepared bread and bread mixes have soya flour added to them. However, the following types of bread are **less likely** to include soya. Always check the ingredients to confirm:

- French-style bread
- Italian bread called ciabatta
- Pitta bread
- Naan bread
- Crumpets
- Bagels
- Tortilla wraps

If you have a bread maker or make bread, you can make soya free bread. This gives you full control over the ingredients used.

Even for products labelled with "may contain soya," it is important to check ingredient lists thoroughly to make sure they meet your dietary needs.

Food group	Soya-free	Foods which contain or may contain soya
Milk products	Cows' milk and cows' milk products. Cheese – cow, goat or ewe based. Cows' milk yoghurt and fromage frais. Oat milk, pea milk, quinoa milk, hemp milk, nut milk, rice milk (if over 4½ years old) Pea desserts. Coconut yogurt	Soya milk, including soya infant formula. Some cottage cheese with added ingredients. Soya yoghurts and desserts. Some ice creams and frozen desserts Cheese substitutes Coffee whiteners or cream replacers Protein shakes
Meat, fish and alternatives	Meat, fish, shellfish – fresh, frozen or smoked without breadcrumbs, sauce or dressings. Lentils, chick-peas and beans (not soya beans), mung beans, kidney beans, hummus Eggs. *Seitan- made from wheat flour and water. Home recipe recommended. To check ingredients of shop varieties	Soya beans and products containing soya beans or textured vegetable protein including many vegetarian meals, soya mince, Quorn, tofu / Tofutti/ Kouridofu (frozen tofu), Tempeh, Yuba, Natto, Nimame, Edamame, Okara (soy pulp), Soja Some meat-based burgers, sausages and pizzas. Some ready-made meals, such as lasagne, microwave dinners, meat pies, curries.
Bread, other cereals and potato	Suitable bread may be difficult to find. 100% wheat or rice breakfast cereals,	Most bread. Breakfast cereals, cake and biscuits and crackers, crispbreads

	porridge, muesli. Potato. Rice. Wheat flour, cornflour, oatmeal, barley, oats Dried pasta, couscous Some savoury snacks, such as plain potato crisps. Bagels, tortilla wraps Plain pastry	Pasta, especially tinned. Many savoury snacks and snack bars Kinako (roasted soya flour) Noodle pots
Fruit and vegetables	All fruit and vegetables – fresh, frozen or tinned without a sauce or dried. Fruit juice. Instant potato, potato croquettes, oven chips, hash brown.	Check those served in sauce. Fruit products Dried fruit coated with chocolate Sprouting soya beans Baked beans. Edamame beans. Coleslaw
Fats	Butter, soya-free margarine, ghee Olive oil. Sunflower oil, safflower oil,	Soya margarine and oil, vegetable margarine and spreads. Vegetable oil
Puddings	Dairy based desserts /custards Rice, sago, tapioca and semolina made with milk or milk substitute (not soya milk) Jelly. Homemade puddings. Coconut yoghurts, ice cream, rice ice creams	Chocolate puddings, chocolate sauces, Ice cream lollies, Soya desserts, soya yogurt, soya custard, soya ice cream Desserts made from bean curd Pancake and waffle mixes

Confectionary	Juice based ice lollies. Dairy and rice chocolate Carob	Plain chocolate. Dairy free soya-based chocolate Soft jellies and gums Mints, chewing gum
Drinks	Fruit juice, squash, cordials Milkshake syrups Fizzy drinks (not for young children) Tea, coffee (not for young children). Cocoa Fruit tea	Instant Horlicks and hot drinking chocolate Cappuccino coffee including the toppings Milkshake made with soya milk Milkshake powders Protein shakes Vending Machine Drinks Alcoholic drinks to note: cocktails, craft beers
Miscellaneous	Jam, honey, marmalade, syrup, treacle Beef and yeast extracts Salt, pepper, herbs, spices Tomato Sauce, Tomato puree Seafood sauce Chutney Sauces made with milk or milk substitute Food colourings, oil-based salad dressings Sugar	Many Chinese dishes and Japanese dishes Soup. Soya sauce. Worcester sauce. Miso. Teriyaki sauce. Tamari sauce, Oyster sauce, Sandwich spread. Mayonnaise. Salad cream. Stock cubes. Gravy powders. Seasoned salt Packet sauce mixes – sweet and savoury. Some baby foods Potato crisps and other snacks Liquid meal replacers

Soya-free snack ideas

- Fresh fruit
- Vegetable sticks or cherry tomatoes
- Soya-free bread or toast
- Soya-free biscuits
- Soya-free crackers
- Plain potato crisps
- Homemade cake or biscuits

Useful websites:

For more information and support on food allergies, you can visit:

- **NHS Food Allergy Information**: www.nhs.uk
- **Allergy UK**: www.allergyuk.org
- **Anaphylaxis Campaign**: www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

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Document History	
Department:	Dietetics
Contact:	26161
Updated:	November 2024
Review:	November 2027
Version:	7.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/695/08