

April 7, 2002

Soy -- friend or foe

In my book, published several months ago, "A Horse and Buggy

Doctor Caught in the 21st Century", I expounded on the healthiness of this versatile legume.

Soy is a complete protein like meat, milk and eggs, a low insulin producer with a glycemic index of only 25 and, in some studies, has shown to prevent cardiovascular disease, cancer, and even replace estrogens in the menopausal years. Two of its isoflavens, genistein and diazolin are, indeed, phytoestrogens that do adhere to the estrogen recep-



**DR. J.E
BLOCK**

ALL THINGS
MEDICAL

tors located throughout the body.

I am now not as enamored with soy.

Two decades ago, when a marked disparity of breast cancer in the United States was compared to that of Japan, it was thought that the soy products were actually protective in preventing breast cancer in Japanese women. However, later studies showed that this may not be so. Actually, it is the much lower fat in the diet and decreased alcohol intake that makes the difference. Since soy does occupy the estrogen receptor of tissue, it deprives cells of receiving the true hormonal information they need.

When picked, soybeans are somewhat toxic. To remove the toxin, manufacturers use chemical processing such as acid baths and heat. Soybeans, called Edamame, can be eaten when fresh, but need to be boiled in salt water for a fair

amount of time to remove the toxins. In laboratory animals, soy has been shown to cause everything from birth defects to cancer. Processed soy powder contains the residual, phytic acid, a substance that blocks the absorption of calcium, magnesium, iodine, and the iron and zinc in the intestinal tract. In addition, it has been discovered that women who eat soy have an earlier spread of their breast cancer. There is a statistical relationship between eating two or more helpings of tofu a week and getting Alzheimer's disease.

So, what do we believe? In my book I list 27 preparations of soy. A quarter of the population has a subtle allergy to soy that can produce symptoms anywhere from brain fog, migraine, irritable bowel syndrome, as well as commonly thought allergies such as stuffy nose, itchy eyes and hay fever.