

ATTACK OF THE KILLER BEAN!

The Case Against Soy

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Trust Us – It's Good For You...

To see, read and hear about it in most mainstream and 'alternative living' media you'd think that the ubiquitous soya bean and its derivatives are the most versatile, natural, heart-friendly, health-improving, fat-preventing, growth-promoting and generally loveable foods ever grown on our good earth. A simple, easily-cultivated bean which has been part of our diet since the dawn of civilization, promising health and vitality to the lactose-intolerant, the new-born, the aged, the menopausal, the frail, the athletic, the health-conscious and just about everyone else as well. It is given freely in the form of food-aid by governments and charitable organisations to developing nations and to those suffering the ravages of flood, drought and famine.

It's inexpensive, available everywhere, on its own or as a vital ingredient in thousands of other food products, such as our daily bread, cakes, confectionery, baby formula, milk and meat substitutes, breakfast cereal, sauces, snackfoods, pasta; it forms the basis of non-stick cooking sprays. It is widely used in stockfeeds and petfoods. Doctors, farmers, nutritionists, athletes, respected companies whose household names have become part of our culture, government authorities - all make a point of telling us how safe and health-giving this wonder-food is for us. It's so good and harmless, they tell us, that it's often not even listed as an ingredient in many processed foods. And even when it is we don't mind; everyone knows it's safe. Our health watchdogs happily accept the assurances given by companies who produce and process it that it is "GRAS" – Generally Regarded As Safe - so it must be.

Around the world, hundreds of millions of acres are devoted to its cultivation, providing a secure cash crop for millions of farmers who cheerfully pay a levy to the developers of their genetically-modified strains to help some of our biggest multi-national corporations spread the gospel that "*Soy is Good For You*".

Too bad that for decades these same developers and corporations have known of and deliberately suppressed the evidence that prolonged ingestion of soy causes cancer and countless other life-threatening illnesses, destroys bone, creates havoc with the hormonal systems of humans and animals alike, represses the sex drive and, even if eliminated from our diets overnight, is so entrenched into the food chain and the bodies of everyone who has ever ingested it, that its adverse effects would still plague the health of generations yet unborn.

The truth behind the blatantly commercial integration of what I call the *Abominable Bean* into the Western diet is a disturbing tale of fraud, corporate irresponsibility, greed, bad science, public and media manipulation, corruption, intimidation, political opportunism, suppression, legal manoeuvring, regulatory inaction and governmental incompetence which makes the tobacco companies look like Good Guys.

Find that hard to believe? Read on, dear reader, and maybe after you've been acquainted with some of the evidence for these assertions you'll share my outrage over the fact that not only is yet another proven life-endangering product allowed to be cultivated, manufactured and sold in the first place, but that in this case its producers and pushers have so successfully

created their own mythology around it that government regulators and so-called health watchdogs have evidently buckled under and given them virtual carte blanche to continue to misinform, confuse and poison not only those who are sucked into consuming their noxious products, but also everyone who is unknowingly obliged to partake of this toxic time bomb through its placement in all manner of basic foodstuffs and in the feed of animals and poultry destined for human consumption. Passive smoking is one thing; forced feeding quite another.

Would You Put Your Newborn Baby on The Pill?

Since my interest in the promotion of safe natural alternatives to many of the manufactured elements of the Australian diet and medical treatment has become widely known, I now receive a daily influx of desperate pleas for help or accounts of terrible personal tragedies directly connected to the use of soy. Some of them you'll share with me in this essay.

And, yes, I do hear from a few people who tell me I've got it all wrong and send me reprints of magazine articles quoting "solid scientific evidence" which "proves" how wonderful and safe soy is for everyone, or assure me that "Sanitarium wouldn't sell it if it wasn't OK". It doesn't seem to have occurred to them, or maybe they don't care, that almost all this 'evidence' and the 'research' on which it is based has been published, and usually funded by, the very same corporations who are producing and selling the stuff. Or that they are perpetuating the "everybody knows" urban myths so helpfully placed in appealing editorial features liberally scattered through the pages of mainstream media and, regrettably, repeated in many health-oriented and alternative lifestyle publications that should know better!

So, if you're one of those who feels bound to harangue me with the "well known fact" that Asian people have thrived on soy for centuries, hold on to your pen for a while and be prepared to learn just how wrong that particular 'Furphy' is. It's one of the most widely-believed 'scientific facts' touted by the proponents of soy – and one of the best examples of how successful they've been in brainwashing the public.

Far more distressing, and never mentioned in the producers' 'solid scientific evidence' are the tales I hear, almost daily, from parents whose baby daughters have commenced menstruation, developed pubic hair, underarm odour and breasts from as young as two three, four and five years of age. Or whose teenage sons are too embarrassed to shower with their mates because they have grown breasts of female proportions or because their genitalia haven't developed.

True, such disasters do not befall *every* child who is fed soy. But neither are they rare, isolated or anecdotal instances. They are the documented, widespread, frequent and in many cases predictable result of hormonal imbalance caused by the assimilation of high levels of oestrogen. And where did the oestrogen come from? From the baby formula and soy drinks fed to these unfortunate offspring by their caring parents – often on professional medical advice. Presumably the same source of 'professional' advice that apparently sees no contradiction in recommending that the identical ingredient prescribed to menopausal women to manipulate their hormonal levels can be safely fed to newborn babies!

In simple terms, though obviously not simple enough for some in the medical profession, feeding an infant soy formula is the equivalent of giving it five birth control pills a day.

The Swiss Health Service put it this way: "100gr of soy protein has the oestrogenic equivalent of one contraceptive pill", and there are numerous other studies published since the early 1960s which confirm this undeniable fact. Many enlightened scientists and medical professionals argue that the continued use of soy in baby formula is a form of genocide, since these effects have been known and published within the scientific community for decades.

Try this for a vicious circle – drinking soy milk during pregnancy can cause a failure to produce breast milk, which then leads to feeding the baby soy formula. By far the most distressing cases of soy damage that I have heard personally are those of women who have drunk soy milk while pregnant, and then fed their babies soy formula. Often these women cannot restrain their tears when describing the dreadful health problems their children suffer. They keep repeating to me, “I didn’t know, I just didn’t know; the doctor told me to drink it for my bones and to feed baby the soy formula”.

The multinational Nestlé Carnation corporation is a major soy advertiser. You may remember them as the company which brought infant formula to third world countries, discouraging breast feeding and killing, according to the World Health Organisation, one and one-half million babies each year. Well, they're still at it, shamelessly flogging their soy milk formulas in spite of all the evidence that it is deadly.

Apart from the ravaging of delicate hormonal systems, serious gastrointestinal disturbances suffered by babies on soy formula are now commonplace.

Surely cases such as these alone should have been sufficient for the use of this killer bean to be outlawed years ago, at least in baby formula? And even if the regulators are not prepared to act, despite all the well-known and easily accessible compelling evidence, how can it be that physicians are still prescribing soy formula – and do you wonder that my website is called ‘doctorsaredangerous.com’?

Unfortunately, outrageous and preventable as are these crimes against infants, they are only the tip of the iceberg. The bad seed within the Killer Bean has no regard for the age or gender of its victims.

So What’s Wrong With It?

I am not a scientist, nor will I subject you to a long technical dissertation, but a basic understanding of the physiology of the soy plant and its subsequent processing is helpful in understanding why the bean is far from being the ‘white knight’ its producers and proponents would have us believe.

Few people are aware that aluminium is one of the most prevalent minerals in soil, but it doesn't affect most crops. The soy plant, however, has an affinity for aluminium, which it extracts from the soil and concentrates in the beans. This contamination is exacerbated by the aluminium tanks used in the acid wash to which soy is subjected during processing. Inevitably, traces of aluminium from both sources are absorbed into the body through the consumption of soy.

Soy milk contains 100 times more aluminium than untreated cow’s milk. And, while on the subject of so-called soy milk, have you ever seen a soy cow? You cannot milk a soy bean; in order to obtain that pure-looking, inviting stream of white liquid pictured so appealingly in the ads, many processes are needed. It is necessary to grind the beans at high temperature, and then extract the remaining oils with dangerous solvents, some of which remain in the meal. Then the meal is mixed with an alkaline solution and sugars, in a separation process designed to remove fibre. Then it is precipitated and separated, using an acid wash. At each stage of processing a tiny amount of poison remains within the soy. Government regulators say it's so small an amount that it doesn't count. I wonder who told them that? And why don't they take notice of the scientists who say it *does* count, due to its accumulation in the body over long periods of soy ingestion? Are you really happy to accept the manufacturer’s assurance that it’s safe to eat a tiny amount of poison each day, perhaps several times a day, until you have a serious health problem?

During my research I came across twelve chemicals that are added after these processes, most of them unpronounceable, and the majority known to be dangerous, if not deadly. I won't bore you with the names but, trust me, you wouldn't want them anywhere near you, much less in your body.

It's also worth mentioning here that a by-product of soy processing is a form of *lecithin*. Unlike the naturally-occurring variety which is found in free-range eggs, nuts, seeds and avocados, this by-product is always rancid, and is extracted from the sludge left after the oil is removed from the beans. It contains high levels of solvents and pesticides. And guess what? Rather than consign it to the toxic waste dump where it belongs, the manufacturers have instead created another hugely-profitable market for it as a 'healthy' food additive. Among its delightful qualities is the ability to induce severe joint pains (often mistaken for arthritis), and serious gout. (During many years as a natural health advocate, I have counselled countless people who thought they had incurable arthritis. Their doctors prescribed strong drugs, without discussing improvement through diet. All reported cessation of symptoms after quitting soy, and/or lecithin; but it requires time, and lots of water).

But back to the bean. Putting in additional poisons is bad enough, but the killer bean hardly needs them to accomplish its deadly purpose. It is already riddled with potential carcinogens and lots of other plant chemicals guaranteed to wreak havoc within the human body! Yet in the face of overwhelming evidence of catastrophic effects resulting from their prolonged ingestion by humans and animals, the soy pushers continue to assert the exact opposite – that all these things are not only harmless but are actually good for you.

At the root of the problem (no pun intended) is the fact that the soy bean contains numerous *phytoestrogens* – a descriptive name for plant chemicals having *oestrogenic* (*oestrus-inducing*) effects. They occur in nature to help regulate animal breeding cycles and, in synthetic form, are used in farming for the same purpose. The ubiquitous birth control pill is, of course, the human synthetic version. At high dosage or over long periods phytoestrogens become anti-oestrogenic. Much higher doses are used in chemotherapy to kill cancer cells.

The class of chemical compounds called phytoestrogens contains dozens of sub-classes, such as *coumestans*, *isoflavones*, *lignans* and *sterols*, each of which contains further sub-classes. Soy contains many isoflavones, including the sub-classes *genistein*, *coumestrol* and *daidzein*.

Scientists have known for years that isoflavones in soy products can depress thyroid function, causing autoimmune thyroid disease and even cancer of the thyroid. As far back as the 1950s phytoestrogens were being linked to increased cases of cancer, infertility, leukaemia and endocrine disruption.

Charlotte Gerson, of the Gerson Cancer Clinic in the USA, has published detailed research proving that the phytoestrogen genistein is more carcinogenic than DES (*Gerson Clinic: Cancer Research, June 1, 2001 - 61 (11): 4325-8*). Few would be unaware of the death and misery that particular drug inflicted on countless women and their daughters.

Ms Gerson also wrote the following in the *Gerson Healing Newsletter*: "Soybeans contain *hemagglutinin*, a clot-promoting substance that causes red blood cells to clump together. These clustered blood cells are unable to properly absorb oxygen for distribution to the body's tissues, which can damage the heart". In his classic book, '*A Cancer Therapy - Results of 50 Cases*', (p. 237) Charlotte's late father, Max Gerson, MD, put soy and soy products on the forbidden list of foods for Gerson Therapy patients.

No less an authority than the US Department of Energy Health Risk Laboratory has published research showing that isoflavones in soy act in the same way as the outlawed insecticide DDT to cause breast cancer cells to multiply. In 1988 a Taiwan University team led by Dr

Theodore Kay remarked that for more than half a century soy has been known to cause thyroid enlargement, especially in women and children.

Dr. Mike Fitzpatrick, a respected toxicologist who is at the forefront of the New Zealand campaign against soy, wrote a paper in 1998 citing much of the published work on the dangers of soy isoflavones, which he submitted to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This paper was also published in the *Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation Journal* under the title '*Isoflavones: Panacea or Poison?*', and subsequently as '*Soy Formulas and the Effect on the Thyroid*' in *The New Zealand Medical Journal* (February 2000). It is long, detailed, and frightening.

Here are just some of the things he has to say: "The toxicity of isoflavones to animals first raised the awareness of the scientific community to the fact that soy isoflavones are endocrine disruptors... There have been profound negative endocrine effects in all animal species studied to date".

In plain speak, this means that your glandular system can be damaged by soy, and if your glands don't function properly, your health will suffer drastically. There is more: "Soy isoflavones increase the risk of breast cancer...Soy isoflavone disrupts the menstrual cycle during, and for up to three months after, administration... Dietary concentration of genistein may stimulate breast cells to enter the cell cycle... Concern was expressed that women fed soy protein isolate have an increased incidence of epithelial hyperplasia".

With these and numerous other credible studies warning women of the adverse effects of prolonged consumption of soy, how, in all conscience, can Australian household brands like *Herron*, *Novogen* and those self-proclaimed icons of good health, *Blackmores* and *Sanitarium*, continue to promote the use of soy and isoflavones extracted from soy as 'tonics' for middle-aged women in menopause? Or health professionals endorse claims that soy is a safe, natural alternative to HRT. What they are pushing is neither safe, nor natural and they should be ashamed for suggesting that it is either.

Phytic acid is another jolly little part of the abominable bean's makeup – and also totally destroys the credibility of the manufacturers' claims that soy products are a good source of calcium and help prevent osteoporosis. Because soy contains more phytic acid than any other grain or pulse, and because phytic acid impairs absorption of all minerals, especially calcium, soy actually strips your body of calcium.

The enzyme inhibitors in soybeans block *trypsin* and other enzymes essential for good health. This can produce serious gastric distress, reduced protein digestion, and chronic deficiencies in essential amino acids.

Where's The Evidence?

All the foregoing, and more, are well-documented, and have been available for many years, with new evidence becoming available almost every day. I am more than happy to supply detailed references for the papers and extracts on which I have drawn for this article, but in the interests of length and clarity will not include all of them here.

For reasons I will explain shortly, some of this 'subversive' material has not achieved wide circulation, being the work of corporate-neutral or independent scientists, who are not in the pay of the multinationals, and who are as voices in the wilderness. Their papers often appear only in esoteric professional journals, or 'alternative' publications, such as the Australian *Nexus Magazine* which also publishes editions in the UK and US, who have been courageous

in pursuing a 'publish and be damned' policy by enabling publication of arguments against the lies of the big corporations.

Nevertheless, through the efforts and dedication of many enlightened, qualified, courageous, independent and highly-respected scientists, researchers and medical practitioners, it has been possible to unearth volumes of credible research and evidence which demonstrates clearly the criminality of the actions of companies, spearheaded by the mighty Monsanto Corporation, whose genetically-modified cultivar is the prime source of all this misery.

Lies, Damn Lies and Press Releases

Bringing the covert actions of the soy industry into the public arena has been an undertaking of truly David and Goliath proportions. The public relations machine extolling the virtues of soy has been global and relentless. It has to be - there are at least 100 million acres of soy under cultivation in the United States alone, much of it genetically engineered. In Australia it is estimated that about 50,000 acres are being cultivated. Displaying the kind of ingenious duplicity which even Machiavelli would surely applaud, and conscious of the public unease regarding genetically modified foods and the trend towards organically-grown produce, Monsanto Corporation has 45 million acres of genetically modified soybeans growing in the United States. American law permits these crops to be mixed with a small amount of organic soybeans, and the resultant combination may then be labelled organic! And you still think the government wouldn't let them lie to you?

With these levels of production at stake a market must be found, increased and maintained. To this end, American soya bean farmers contribute approximately US\$80 million per year to finance what is one of the most effective propaganda campaigns ever known to the Western world. The resultant high-powered publicity blitz ensures that 'news' stories about soy's benefits are everywhere, reinforced by multi-million dollar advertising campaigns.

Thumb through any popular women's magazine, read the newspapers, watch the television commercials and count those for soy drinks alone. Soy producers, processors and manufacturers spend billions of dollars advertising the 'goodness' of their products. The economics of the mass media ensure that such expenditure guarantees the regular placement of news and feature items extolling the claimed health benefits of soy. The same economics also guarantee that the chances are minimal of any extensive publicity being given to reports of tragic cases such as those mentioned earlier, and the dire warnings of hundreds of corporate-neutral scientific and academic researchers. What media mogul is going to risk offending the Goose that lays these particular Golden Eggs by appearing to question the worth of the product or the truth of the ads?

Sure, occasionally a report of adverse scientific findings or medical evidence may be too newsworthy to be ignored and find its way into the inside pages. No problem; in the interests of balanced reporting, the manufacturer will receive their Right of Reply and has an army of in-house or retained 'independent' experts ready with a rebuttal. Even if the rebuttal is unsubstantiated, or based on limited or inaccurate research, it will be published and we're all expected to drink up our soy milk and go back to sleep. Believe me, this industry has secured the services of some of the best scientific prostitutes money can buy. And if that doesn't work, the usual 'Plan B' is simply to attempt to discredit the whistleblower.

But it's not only the media who bear responsibility for helping the soy industry carry out this mass-manipulation and brainwashing. Most of our health professionals appear so busy, or so unconcerned, that even if they were prepared to question what you're told in the glossy handouts the suppliers give them to hand to you if you ask for information, they probably wouldn't consider it worthwhile. Consider the words of Dr Raymond Peat, the noted

endocrine physiologist at the University of Oregon who was one of the first to blow the whistle on the dangers of HRT, years before it finally made headlines:

"There is a distinct herd instinct among people who 'work in science' which makes it easy to believe whatever sounds plausible, if a lot of other people are saying it is true. Sometimes powerful economic interests help people to change their beliefs. For example, two of the biggest industries in the world, the oestrogen industry and the soy bean industry, spend vast amounts of money helping people to believe certain plausible-sounding things that help them sell their products."

We could add to that the tendency for people to believe what they want to believe. Especially when it's comforting, reassuring and comes from 'someone who knows'.

None So Blind As Those Who Will Not See

Which brings me to my well-intentioned but badly misled critics mentioned earlier. Those who are so offended that I should dare to question the masses of 'independent scientific research' extolling the virtues of their favourite health-giving food. Or that I should choose to dismiss the 'well known fact' that people in Japan practically live on soy and don't suffer from any of the problems I go on about.

Many of the subjects I debate with students during my lectures at Hippocrates Health Centre and at public speaking engagements are controversial. There are always some who disagree, but they accept these findings when presented with evidence. The soy controversy, however, is another matter, and some simply can't accept what I say. Their arguments always centre on their perception that 'everyone' says soy is good; they've read glowing press releases on soy; listened to what health professionals have told them; and surely there's no question about the 'fact' that Asian women do so well on soy food and have few problems with menopause or osteoporosis.

These arguments are so fallacious and so dependant on what the world's most effective commercial publicity machine would have us believe that it's hard to know where to begin. But here goes.

To begin with, soy does *not* comprise a major part of the Japanese, or any other Asian diet. And it is likely that very little of the domestically produced soy is grown from the genetically modified cultivar which dominates the Western market. In any case, except in poverty and during times of famine, Asians consume soy in tiny amounts - 7 to 8 grams per day - and most of this has been fermented for from 3 to 5 years to remove the toxins. The fermentation process also reduces the growth depressants in all soy products, but does not remove them entirely. The Japanese eat a small amount of tofu and miso as part of a mineral-rich broth, followed by meat or fish, which offsets some of the dangers.

Dr. Raymond Peat and others have shown that tofu (a soy derivative) consumption is associated with dementia. In a major US study, eight thousand Japanese-American men from Hawaii were assessed for mid-life tofu consumption and its relation to brain function and structural changes in later life. Researchers performed radiologic brain neuro-imaging, extensive cognitive function studies, and post mortem follow-ups. Among the subjects of the study, an increased level of tofu consumption was found to be associated with indications of brain atrophy and cognitive impairment in later life. They even found, at autopsy, swelling of the brain cavities and a decrease in brain weight among heavy tofu eaters. This study was reported in 'The Journal Of The American College Of Nutrition', April 2000, and reprinted in Dr. William Campbell Douglass' 'Second Opinion' Newsletter.

Whilst on the subject of soy consumption in Asian countries, one real and bitter truth that does not appear in the producers' handouts is that in parts of China where the people are too poor to get other forms of protein, their intake of soy has created, according to scientists who went there and studied the situation, 100 million cretins. This has occurred due to the goitrogens in soy, which, as we have seen, depress the thyroid gland and can create brain damage. New Zealand toxicologist Dr Mike Fitzpatrick says, "An epidemiological study in China has shown that high soy intake is not protective against breast cancer. There have been several similar studies, which have refuted the theory that soy helps prevent breast cancer".

Furthermore, Asians, unlike Westerners, do not guzzle soy protein isolate as a milk substitute. Milk is not a part of their culture.

So how do these 'myths' originate? In recent years, several studies have been published regarding the soybean's effect on human health. Thanks to the power of the well-oiled PR machine, the most widely-published results are those of the studies *underwritten by various factions of the soy industry*. Not surprisingly, they are always overwhelmingly in favour of soy. The primary claims about soy's health benefits are based purely on bad science. Although arguments for cancer patients to use soy focus on statistics showing low rates of breast, colon and prostate cancer among Asian people, there are obvious facts being utterly ignored.

While soy-funded studies boast that Asian women suffer far fewer cases of breast cancer than do American women, they neglect to point out that these Asian women eat a diet that is dramatically different from that of their Western counterparts. The standard Asian diet consists of more natural products, and greater amounts of vegetables and more fish. Their diets are also lower in chemicals and toxins, as they eat far fewer processed foods. It is likely these studies are influenced by the fact that cancer rates rise among Asian people who move to the U.S. and adopt American diets. Ignoring the remarkable diet and lifestyle changes, to assume only that reduced levels of soy in these American-Asian diets is a primary factor in greater cancer rates, is bad science.

As for the osteoporosis/menopause protection myth, it is absurd to infer that soy protects Asian women. Their habits and diets, as mentioned above, containing little junk food, are totally different from those of Westerners. Further, they rarely smoke or drink alcohol, and have not replaced vitamin D-containing butter with the damaging soy oil margarine so popular with misguided Westerners.

Need more evidence of the soy producers' dominance of what you can read about their product? A widely circulated article, written by Jane E. Allen, Associated Press Science Writer, entitled '*Scientists Suggest More Soy in Diet*', cites numerous speakers in the course of a symposium discussing the probable advantages of soy under the topic, '*Health Impact of Soy Protein*'. Their deliberations are still widely quoted as proof of soy's beneficial effects. Interestingly, the article also states that the \$50,000 symposium *was underwritten by Protein Technologies International of St.Louis, a DuPont subsidiary that makes soy protein!* How's that for impartiality?

Other popular arguments in support of soy state that fermented soy products like tempeh or natto contain high levels of vitamin B12. However, these supportive arguments fail to mention that soy's B12 is an inactive B12 analog, not utilised as a vitamin in the human body. Some researchers speculate this analog may actually serve to block the body's B12 absorption. It has also been found that allergic reactions to soybeans are far more common than to all other legumes. Even the American Academy of Pediatrics admits that early

exposure to soy through commercial infant formulas may be a leading cause of soy allergies among older children and adults.

And while on ‘Furphys’, one persistent critic tells me that he “knows for sure” that allowing the bean to sprout removes all the toxins. He remains unconvinced by the scientific evidence that shows that sprouting allows genistein to metamorphose into coumestrol, which happens to be 30 times more oestrogenically potent!

A while back, as information regarding the dangers of soy started leaking out, the public relations machine went into overdrive, churning out stories about how the ‘baddies’ known to be in soy are removed during processing. This is a complete untruth, which has been refuted by many studies, yet is fervently espoused by the soy adherents. As described earlier, processing actually *adds* more deadly ingredients to an already potent toxic cocktail.

There are many more ‘truths’ that the pro-soy lobby will trot out as the answer to just about any health concern, and if you still believe the claim that taking soy will improve hormonal health in men and women, consider this. Eating soy in order to promote hormonal health is not only dangerous, it is futile, as reported in *Nexus Magazine*: “Celibate monks living in monasteries and leading a vegetarian lifestyle find soy foods quite helpful because they dampen libido”.

Watchdogs or Lapdogs?

In developed countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, governments have established statutory bodies with the power to ensure the safety of proprietary food and drugs made available to the public. Sadly, as far as the marketing of soy is concerned, the FDA in the US and the Australia-New Zealand Food Authority, ANZFA, have both displayed a willingness to put the commercial interests of manufacturers ahead of those of the consumers, even to the extent of falsifying data or withholding commercially unpalatable information.

In our own region, one recent extraordinary and blatant case of deliberate government deception has come to light – and been totally ignored by the media. It concerns, once again, the use of soy in baby formula, and should be considered carefully by anyone who is still under the impression that “They wouldn’t be allowed to sell it if it wasn’t OK”.

In March 1999, ANZFA prepared a document with the catchy title, “*An Assessment of The Potential Risks to Infants Associated with Exposure to Soy-Based Infant Formulas*”.

In Section 3.1, *Hazard Identification*, some potential hazards are listed:

3.1.2 Stimulation of oestrogen-sensitive tissue; Infertility; Sexual differentiation; Sexual maturation.

3.1.3 Neonatal brain development.

3.1.4 Thyroid alterations: Immune responses.

5.1.1 Dietary exposures: An exposure to hormone levels 240 times higher than breast milk.

6.0 Risk Assessment: “It is clear that phytoestrogens pose a potential hazard to the consumer of soy foods”.

The signatories to this document included the Chief Toxicologist, Dr Luba Tomaska, together with Dr Fiona Cumming (ANZFA), Dr P Tuohy of the New Zealand Ministry of Health, and five academic experts in food safety from both Australia and New Zealand. Among the authoritative references examined by this committee was a 1999 assessment from a US

Federal government laboratory, *'Anti-thyroid Isoflavins From Soybean: Isolation, Characterisation and Mechanism of Action'*, which examines 50 years of medical reports of thyroid harm and describes how it occurs.

The committee's final report was clear and unambiguous in its conclusions that the inclusion of soy in infant formula was potentially hazardous.

Yet, in May 2002, this same body, ANZFA, prepared a document for the signatures of all the Health Ministers of the Australian States and Territories and for the Australian and New Zealand Federal Health Ministers, setting standards for infant formulas *which contained no hint or mention of the hazards detailed in their own expert committee's Risk Assessment document.*

Following ANZFA's recommendations, all these health ministers, presumably unaware of the hazards which someone in ANZFA considered not worth bringing to their attention, signed the document. The result is that the agreed Standard for the composition of infant formula sold in Australia and New Zealand, now approves the inclusion of ingredients which its own expert committee (as well as many other authorities) have labelled severely detrimental to health.

Such approval flies in the face of Australian food safety and practice laws and puts our children at risk of permanent endocrine disruption and infertility.

But it gets worse! Australian politicians, spurred by worried constituents who were questioning the inclusion of soy in baby formula, are asking ANZFA for more information. The Authority's standard response is unbelievable – and a barefaced lie:

“...there is no evidence that exposure of healthy infants to soy-based infant formulas over 30 years has been associated with any demonstrated harm”.

Isn't it good to know that we have such honest and ethical watchdogs to safeguard our children's health?

The Americans fare no better in trusting their government-appointed watchdogs. Their Food and Drug Administration has control over what claims are permitted to be made for food and drug products. They employ scientists and researchers to investigate and validate the claims made by manufacturers for their products and ingredients.

But, when it suits, the agency apparently has no compunction in ignoring, and pillorying, its own experts in order to please a manufacturer. As in the case of Daniel M Sheehan, Ph.D, director of the FDA's Estrogen Base Program in the Division of Genetic and Reproductive Toxicology, and Daniel R Doerge, Ph.D, a member of the Division of Bio-chemical Toxicology, who, in 1998, protested the FDA's handling of a cardiovascular health claim by the giant DuPont soy manufacturing subsidiary, Protein Technologies International.

Both Sheehan and Doerge had written a letter vigorously opposing the claim, which centred largely on claimed beneficial effects of isoflavones in relation to lowering cholesterol levels. The two scientists, both specialists in oestrogen research, instead suggested a warning might be more appropriate.

The FDA's response was to make the unprecedented move of rewriting PTI's petition, substituting all reference to isoflavones with the words 'soy protein' – a move in flagrant contradiction of FDA's own regulations, and which then resulted in the health claim being allowed. They also banned Sheehan and Doerge from making public comment on the issue.

In a more passive action, the FDA has now become so acquiescent when it comes to helping the soy peddlers they have even allowed them to ‘self regulate’. A manufacturer or processor is, with little if any supporting evidence, allowed to declare their product ‘GRAS’ – Generally Regarded As Safe – a nomenclature which basically says, “This is OK and won’t harm you because nobody has complained about it”.

Only in America? Don’t you believe it!

Speak Out At Your Peril

Many of those who have dared to speak and act against the industry and its political protectors have suffered both physically and financially as a direct result. The story of a New Zealand couple, Valerie and Richard James, who have now devoted their lives to exposing the evils of this trade, is worthy of honourable mention. Much of the suppressed research and evidence has been brought to worldwide attention through their single-mindedness and courage, and they have been a great source of inspiration, advice and information to me and to many others in our efforts to spread the word.

I first became aware of the James’ work from an article in *Nexus Magazine*. Breeders of tropical birds, the couple had been alerted to the genetic effects of soy when they switched to bird feed which was based on soy protein – with disastrous results; “deformed, stunted and stillborn babies and premature deaths among females, with the result that the total population in the aviaries went into steady decline”. They then realised that many of the symptoms suffered by their birds were similar to the symptoms suffered by their children, who had been fed soy formula. Understandably, they were deeply disturbed by what soy had done to their children and their birds, and enlisted the aid of toxicologist Mike Fitzpatrick, PhD, whose work is detailed elsewhere in this essay. Together they formed an alliance to investigate and expose what big business and government preferred to hide.

While preparing the sixth edition of my book, I rang Valerie and Richard in Whangarei, New Zealand, to introduce myself and ask a favour. I needed a paragraph on the reaction of the soy industry and the New Zealand Government to their nine-year crusade against feeding babies soy formula. As Richard said, “It’s impossible to compress years of fear and a constant feeling of menace into a paragraph”. So they sent me, instead, a huge envelope stuffed full of the most horrifying information, which instilled in me a feeling of menace which remains with me to this day.

Even I, with my knowledge of cosy industry/government connections, was shocked by what I read. The James’ enclosed a copy of the painstakingly-researched scientific proof they had presented to the government. This document is so damning that I was astonished they had been unable to persuade the government to even consider the problem. They enclosed hair-raising details of industry/government threats, lies from officials who were and are protecting the soy industry, and details of careers that were destroyed, grants withdrawn, and research papers censored or not published.

The pressure on one of the scientists with whom they worked was so great that his assistant suffered a nervous breakdown and had to flee the country. Probably the worst of all is that their government was and still is prepared to go to any lengths to protect the soy industry and their multi-billions in annual profits. Even their Federal Health Minister was firmly aligned behind the baby killers!

As they have become recognised as serious threats to the continued dominance of the pro soy lobbyists, the James’ have faced all manner of threats, personal vilification and legal actions. Their own government actually allowed a soy producer to use government-funded Legal Aid to sue the James’ for telling the truth about their product! The James’, of course, had to fund

their own crippling legal defence. Despite this, and with increasing public support, they are preparing to lead a class action against Monsanto and others on behalf of thousands whose lives have been affected by the Killer Bean.

Visit Dr Fitzpatrick's website: www.soyonlineservice.co.nz , and you will be able to see not only the mountain of credible evidence he and the James' have assembled against the actions of the multinationals, but also get a sense of some of the lengths to which their detractors will go in their attempts to discredit them. This courageous couple are being pilloried for trying to save millions of babies from the crippling effects of soy formula! They should be thanked, instead of being sued and threatened. It's not only depressing, it's outrageous.

It would seem that there is no way decent people can win against the multinationals when these corporations are backed by governments.

Truth Will Out

But maybe there is hope yet. Slowly, and despite the power of the vested interests and the complacency and laissez-faire attitude of governments, the truth is beginning to emerge. The US Congress is now taking seriously a plethora of complaints and legal actions being instituted against Monsanto on behalf of millions of Americans whose lives have been ruined through the corporate greed of this legalised drug pusher. This is largely due to the Weston A Price Foundation, a Washington public interest charitable organisation, conducting an unrelenting political lobbying campaign in Congressional Committees. In addition, the prestigious Georgetown University has sponsored a national forum on the food supply, with emphasis on the potential liability of soy products, to be held during the (US) Fall of 2002. The Environmental Law Forum of the Georgetown Law School has specifically asked the Weston A. Price Foundation to prepare a brief on the legality of soy foods.

In other countries, notably Australia and New Zealand, as well as the USA, class actions are being mounted which will finally make public the human toll and the extent of cover-up, falsification, manipulation, harassment, threats and other illegal activities undertaken by powerful multinationals in order to maintain the multi-billion-dollar profits generated by this innocuous-looking, genetically modified and deadly poisonous bean.

And a ray of hope is coming from another, perhaps surprising, direction. Some of soy's most vocal supporters are now having cause to reconsider their stance – and their beliefs. As I have indicated throughout this essay, the adverse effects of soy often take years to manifest and are no respecter of persons. It was therefore with mixed emotions that I recently learned that two prominent advocates of the ongoing use of soy, American MD Christiane Northrup and Australian naturopath Nancy Beckham have both been diagnosed with health problems directly related to excessive soy intake: hypothyroidism and osteoporosis.

Paradoxically, Dr Northrup still denies that soy has anything to do with hypothyroidism, despite the clear evidence to the contrary, and continues taking her soy preparation every day.

Nancy Beckham has always dismissed the idea that soy contributes to osteoporosis, because she claims to “successfully” use soy milk in her treatment protocols for osteoporosis in her Sydney clinic, and is well-known for her published responses to the anti-soy articles written by Sally Fallon, MA, president of the Weston A Price Foundation, and the highly-respected authority on nutrition, Mary Enig, PhD.

I can only wish them well, even in their apparent state of denial, and leave you with the words of another victim of soy-induced hypothyroidism, courageous US dietitian Joyce Gross, MA, RD, LD/N, who recently sent the following email to her own patients and friends:

Hi everyone (especially the women)

Some of you may remember that last year I was touting soy along with the rest of the medical profession regarding their beneficial effects. I was consuming soy for their phytoestrogen effect to alleviate menopausal symptoms. I was duped like so many other non-suspecting consumers.

I have developed Hashimoto's Disease or acute Hashimoto's Thyroiditis which is an acute autoimmune disease that affects the thyroid gland. (In basic terms this means that my thyroid is attacking itself and I can no longer produce thyroid hormone.) My initial symptoms included things like severe joint pain especially in my hands, "trigger" finger(s), carpal tunnel syndrome, excessive weight gain (I gained about 25 lbs. in 3-4 weeks which, of course, when you are a Registered Dietitian you can calculate how many calories you are taking in and it just doesn't correlate with the amount of weight one is gaining), chronic fatigue syndrome, a "brain fog", depression, among others. (Classic symptoms of hypothyroidism are that you gain an unexplained amount of weight in a short period of time and that your hair falls out).

It took almost 4 months before everything was figured out (by me) and it was not really diagnosed properly by my physicians. About 3-4 months after I initially started the soy supplement I had been taking (now this would also include any soy isoflavone pills you may be taking as well), I developed a "hyper" state, where my resting pulse rate was 125, and I was having 100's of palpitations a day. Of course, so many of the symptoms I mentioned above

can be related to so many other diseases or conditions (especially menopause and when you've never been in menopause before - how does one know what is normal and what is not?) but of course, when the "heart" thing started, this got me to a cardiologist and fast. I didn't know if I was having a heart attack or what.

The only thing I could think of as I was waiting for the cardiologist to call me back that I had done differently was the soy. So I went onto 'Google', put in "toxic effects of soy", and thyroid disease (especially hypothyroidism) came up. Well, I 'm saying to myself, "that doesn't make sense". How can I be hypothyroid with a resting pulse rate of 125! So, it's in the back of my mind but I'm thinking it's not feasible. Anyway, I go to the cardiologist, have all kinds of tests, echocardiogram, Holter monitor on for 24 hours, etc. I am told that "there's nothing wrong with you. Go home and take your estrogen and you'll feel better." Well, I won't tell you how angry that made me. I insisted that there was something wrong with me and told the doctor to have my labs faxed to me and I would look for another doctor to help me. When my labs came through my fax machine, I almost fainted. They did a TSH (the indicator for thyroid disease) and it was elevated! (which means that I had an underactive thyroid).

Later on, after researching this thing to death, I found out that my symptoms of the "hyper" state are sometimes quite common and many women wind up in the emergency room as a result. Apparently, in Hashi's, just before your thyroid stops working completely, it can go "haywire" and put you into a hyper and hypo state. It has taken 8 months now for me to start feeling better. Adjustments in thyroid medication take some time and I have finally been losing weight, have no more carpal tunnel syndrome, etc.

So, this brings me to my word of caution. If any of you, or your wives, are taking soy product, isoflavone pills or homeopathic-type menopausal products, please be careful. I have since found out that Hashi's can take 8 years to diagnose (we don't build up the antibodies overnight to it) and from an email that I sent out to a few of you the other day, I know that some of you are also hypothyroid. There are tons of websites to go to for more information or email me if you are affected by this and I will be happy to help you find some. The soybean industry is a multi-billion dollar industry in this country so they are trying to keep this quiet, even though there have been doctors in the FDA who have written position papers regarding the dangers of soy.

Just before I started writing this note to you, I received an email from a woman in the United Kingdom who is interested in my testimonial along with many others. She is a consumer representative on a government committee which is looking into health concerns over

phytoestrogens. I have also been in touch over the past several months with people in New Zealand who are also "on the bandwagon" regarding the dangers of soy. They have several documented animal studies showing the ill effects of soy.

With so many new products coming out containing soy, and the continued "touting" of it as a major benefit, more and more women are going to become hypothyroid. I am currently working as a nutrition expert in treating depression, bi-polar disorder and substance abuse problems. I can't tell you how many of the women who are admitted for depression are also hypothyroid to the point now that the medical doctor automatically first checks their TSH before the psychiatrists even start prescribing their meds. If I hadn't been so adamant about taking over my own health issues last August, I could have very easily wound up being a patient in my own hospital.

Menopause doesn't mean that we are supposed to be depressed. Menopause is great, though I used to tell people that was a whole lot of crap several months ago.

If you are having any of the symptoms mentioned above, don't assume it's the menopause. It is estimated that there are about 10 million women out there who have hypothyroidism and don't know it. Are you one of them? Have your TSH level checked every few years and if you are taking soy, you may want to give serious consideration to stopping it.

My guess is that a class action suit will eventually develop out of all of this but of course, the way things work it'll probably take a few years. I am going to be very actively involved in this area over the next several months assisting those groups and individuals who are publicizing this health concern.

If any of you are or have been experiencing any of what I've told you, PLEASE CONTACT ME!!!

And if you think you may have hypothyroidism, just go onto 'Google' and type in "symptoms of hypothyroidism" for more information regarding the symptoms.

As always, Joyce

(Joyce Gross, M.A., R.D., L.D/N.)

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