

## Mothers need good nutrition too

### Here's what moms need to eat to stay healthy

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Like all women, mothers have the same health issues from heart, reproductive and hormonal imbalances. However, mothers tend to put their needs at the bottom of their list of priorities.



This is detrimental to their overall health. It's a mother's instinct to naturally take care of her family. However, our moms need to nurture themselves too. The family also has a responsibility to look after her needs. That may seem unconventional to many people because we grew up relying on our moms. Unfortunately, they are not invincible. Mothers get sick too.

If you are a mother, here are two practical things that you can do to elevate your health in your list of top priorities.

Discover the joy of eating soy

Soy is a complete protein source from plants that is tantamount to the quality of protein that we get from egg, fish, chicken, and other meat products sans the downside of pro-inflammatory effects of consuming animal meat. In addition to the muscle-building protein that this superfood provides, soy has other plant powers that other animal protein sources cannot offer – phytoestrogens! These are plant chemicals that have weak estrogen-like properties. Contrary to what some may believe, these plant hormones do not cause cancer at all. In fact, they compete with cancer cells in attaching to hormone receptors in the body. Thus, preventing cancer from attaching to healthy cells. The isoflavones genistein and daidzein are the types of phytoestrogens found in soy.

In a meta-analysis conducted by Ioannis Boutas and colleagues entitled: “Soy Isoflavones and Breast Cancer Risk,” they concluded that consumption of soy isoflavones can reduce the risk of breast cancer both in pre post-menopausal women.

In addition to muscle building, hormone regulation, and cancer prevention, soy promotes heart health by lowering bad cholesterol in the blood and triglycerides. It is also a good source of prebiotics which feed the good bacteria in the gut for better immune system and digestive health. Soy also aids in managing symptoms of hot flashes. Now these are tremendous benefits that you get from one plant food alone. Make sure that you get your soy isoflavones from whole food sources like soybeans, edamame, pure soy powder, tofu, miso, natto, and soymilk. Make sure they're not from synthetic and isolated isoflavones in pill form. Replace at least one meat dish per day with a soy dish to get your daily dose of isoflavones. Substitute cow's milk with soymilk too.

Make cruciferous vegetables a staple on your table

Mothers work hard physically. They need bone strength to prevent fractures and other injuries. Dark green vegetables which include crucifers or cruciferous vegetables are calcium-rich. Instead of getting calcium from dairy sources like milk and cheese, calcium from plants is better absorbed in the body contrary to what we have been made to believe about milk being the greatest calcium source. Dairy products may be rich in calcium but we only get to absorb about thirty percent. On the other hand, plant sources of calcium may have less the amount of calcium but we get to absorb more than fifty percent. If we compare 1 cup of milk which has about 300mg calcium and we get to absorb 100mg to 1 cup of crucifer that has about 160mg calcium and we absorb approximately 80g, then there isn't much difference. It's better to get your calcium from crucifers because you get the benefits of phytochemicals or plant chemicals and not just the calcium.

Cruciferous vegetables contain phytochemicals known as sulforaphanes. These are compounds that contain sulfur which are helpful in liver detoxification, regulation of estrogen hormones, and prevention of cancer. Estrogen is what makes women look youthful but too much of it can cause hormone-related cancers.

Cruciferous vegetables must be consumed daily. You can choose from a variety of crucifers to consume on a daily basis. These are cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, radish, turnip, bok choy, collard greens, arugula, Brussels sprouts, horseradish, kale, rutabaga, watercress and wasabi.

Unfortunately, blast-freezing frozen veggies and cooking or heat application will deactivate the enzyme myrosinase. This is vital to the production of sulforaphane in crucifers. Shall we eat raw broccoli now?

If you prefer cooked vegetables, then it is important to chop the crucifers and leave them on the counter for about 40 minutes before cooking. That will allow myrosinase to combine with glucoraphanin to produce sulforaphane. It pays to have a good prep time. Perhaps you can chop broccoli first and then proceed to do other dishes and cook the veggies last.

If you prefer to eat raw crucifers like cabbage and turnips, make sure you chew them properly.

That will again activate the enzyme myrosinase so you get the good benefits of sulforaphane.

Mothers should also prioritize their health and ensure good nutrition. Feeding yourself with nutrient-rich foods will benefit not only yourself but also the people you love.

Advanced Happy Mother's Day!

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