

PROMISE MAGAZINE  
GREAT FOODS—NUTS AND SOY  
THE “GO AHEAD” DOESN’T MEAN GO AHEAD  
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Nuts and soy products are wonderful foods—we have learned this over the last several years. Soy: known to lower cholesterol levels, reduce risks of certain cancers, and a great source of fiber. Nuts: historically, a “limit these” food—high in calories and high in fat. Today—back on the “healthy for us” list.

Many years of research teaches us that we must continue to be well-read and well-educated consumers. The nutrition information of yesterday is most-likely not the information of tomorrow. If you have taken an interest in soy—including in products such as tofu, edamame, soy sauce, soy cheese, soy milk and yogurt; even snacks such as soy crisps and soy crackers—you have learned that eating soy products is incredibly healthy. Yes, there are numerous studies which support the fact that soy lowers cholesterol and other fat levels, and studies which describe the lower risks for tumor formation. However, and this is one big however, I have come across research which claims that increased soy intake may mean an *increase* in breast cancer tumors. As soon as I read those studies, I am careful with how many soy products I will suggest to my clients. No question—soy products contain a moderate amount of calories and are very high in fiber—wonderful for our bowel health, too, and a terrific source of iron and protein. My suggestion, as always, is eat soy products in moderation. *Note:* if you have breast cancer or are a breast cancer survivor, avoid soy products at all costs. Be conservative. Be safe.

Nuts—another food that requires some explanation as we eat bags of them at the baseball and basketball games. Ten years ago, I discouraged my clients from eating nuts—they were loaded with calories and fat. Yes, also a good source of fiber, protein and iron. Hence, in recent years, we have discovered that nuts contain high levels of monounsaturated fats, the “healthiest” fat to date, in addition to its above healthful properties. There is one catch—“go ahead” doesn’t mean go ahead! Take notice of the fact that excess calories and lack of physical activity account for much of our chronic disease and obesity issues around the world. Even France, known for their healthy lifestyle, is catching up.

So, once again, a *few tablespoons* of nuts—not ½ cup serving at a sitting. And we are then ingesting cholesterol-lowering fat, and about 150 calories. Walnuts, especially, have received special attention due to their high levels of omega-3-fatty acids, important for heart health. I repeat—moderation, moderation, moderation—of the healthy foods too! Eat well. Live well.

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