

The meal as medicine: Anti-obesity effects of soy in a rat model of menopause

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Research to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior (SSIB), the foremost society for research into all aspects of eating and drinking behavior, finds that a diet rich in soy prevents weight gain in post-menopausal female rats.

Previous research suggests that reduced levels of the hormone estrogen during menopause are responsible for the increased body weight and abdominal fat often experienced by [postmenopausal women](#). However, while estrogen replacement therapies can reduce [weight gain](#), they also have unwelcome side effects, prompting a search for alternative methods of treatment. Soy naturally contains estrogen-like compounds called phytoestrogens, and so dietary soy may provide an alternative to typical estrogen replacement therapies.

Michelle Murphy from the Monell Chemical Senses Center found decreased body weight and increased [energy expenditure](#) in post-menopausal rats after adding soy phytoestrogens to their regular diet. She comments, "These results have implications for the development of alternative natural treatments for obesity in post-menopausal women." The results of this study highlight the need for further research into the actions of phytoestrogens on food intake in humans to determine the more long-term effects of consuming a soy-rich diet. "In this world of an ever-increasing [obesity epidemic](#), finding natural dietary solutions and treatments to combat obesity are of the utmost importance both to worldwide health and economy", says Murphy.

Provided by Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior

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