Garlic Dip with Crudités

For a great appetizer before dinner or as a snack any time of the day, try this quick and easy-to-make dip that goes with any type of fresh cut vegetables (such as carrots, celery, cucumbers, or bell peppers. Vegetable appetizers are a great way to curb your appetite before a meal.

Prep and Cook Time: 5 minutes
2 cups cooked or canned garbanzo beans (no BPA)
1 TBS fresh lemon juice
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1/4 cup chicken or vegetable broth
3 TBS extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Serve with sliced carrots, cucumbers, celery and/or sliced red bell peppers, or any raw vegetable of your choice

Source: here

Healthy Food Tip

I've heard that tofu is a great source of calcium but I'm wondering if there is any downside to it?

Most tofu has been prepared using added calcium, so it's actually even better than you might think for people who are worried about bone calcium and osteoporosis. Four ounces of tofu usually contain about 400 milligrams of calcium when calcium has been used in the processing (precipitation) of tofu.
The fact that a food appears in The World's Healthiest Foods book and website does not mean that that food, including tofu, is for everyone. I recognize the need to personalize food choices, to find a healthy menu that truly matches a person's individual needs. For example, there's no doubt about it that some people need to steer clear of soy products, like tofu, while some people can tolerate soy in moderate doses only. Many other people can eat soy foods in substantial amounts on a regular basis and do just fine while other people actually need to incorporate soy into their menu for health reasons and get specific benefits from doing so. I'm not aware of major problems with soy consumption beyond the issues involving oxalate content, goitrogenic effect, and allergic response.

Here's more on these issues:

**Oxalates**

As mentioned above, soybeans are among a small number of foods that contain any measurable amount of oxalates, naturally occurring substances found in plants, animals, and human beings. When oxalates become too concentrated in body fluids, they can crystallize and cause health problems. For this reason, individuals with already existing and untreated kidney or gallbladder problems may want to limit soybean consumption. Additionally, while oxalates can bind together with calcium and lower its absorption, it's important to remember that the calcium and the oxalates in tofu don't "cross each other out" and you still get calcium, protein, and many other essential nutrients from your tofu.

**Goitrogenic effect**

Soybeans contain goitrogens, naturally occurring substances in certain foods that interfere with the functioning of the thyroid gland. Individuals with already existing and untreated thyroid problems may want to limit soybean consumption (and therefore, tofu consumption) for this reason. It's also important to note, however, that several studies involving large groups of women show no negative impact of soybean consumption on thyroid hormone levels. It is also worth noting that cooking may help to inactivate the goitrogenic compounds found in soybeans. In the human studies that we have reviewed, only one repeated finding has given us cause for concern when it comes to adult consumption of whole soy foods and thyroid-related
effects. That concern involves individuals who regularly consume soy foods while at the same time following a diet that is deficient in iodine.

**Allergic Response**

Although allergic reactions can occur to virtually any food, research studies on food allergy consistently report more problems with some foods — such as soybeans and foods made from them — than others. Some of the most common symptoms for food allergies include eczema, hives, skin rash, headache, runny nose, itchy eyes, wheezing, gastrointestinal disturbances, depression, hyperactivity, and insomnia. If you suspect a food allergy to soybeans, you will want to consult with a dietitian or other licensed healthcare provider who specializes in food allergy before making a decision about the role of tofu in your Healthiest Way of Eating.

**Genetically Modified Soybeans**

A large percentage of the conventionally grown soybeans in the United States come from genetically modified (GM) seeds. If you are looking your exposure to GM foods, choose organically grown soybeans and foods such as tofu (as well as tempeh and miso) made from it, since the current USDA organic regulations prohibit the use of GM seeds for growing foods to be labeled as organically grown.
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