

# Beef and Fat

## BEEF'S PLACE IN HEART HEALTH

THINKBEEF<sup>CA</sup>

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Canadians are consuming red meat in moderate amounts. On average, Canadians consume 288 grams of fresh red meat per week.<sup>1</sup> That is less than 1 portion of red meat per day.

On average, fresh red meat contributes only 7% of the fat consumed in the diet of Canadians.<sup>2</sup>

More than half of the fat in beef is unsaturated. In fact, most of the unsaturated fat in beef is oleic acid, the same type of healthy fat found in olive oil.<sup>3</sup>

A typical 75 gram portion of cooked beef contains only 3 grams of saturated fat.<sup>3</sup> That is approximately the same amount of saturated fat you would find in an equal portion of roasted chicken thigh.<sup>4</sup>

Research supports including beef in a heart healthy diet. Over 10 years of research shows that eating fresh red meat does not increase heart disease risk, and may actually help decrease cholesterol levels.

- The European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) found no association between eating red meat and any cause of death, including cancer or heart disease. This study followed close to half a million people for more than 12 years.<sup>5</sup>
- The BOLD study, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, demonstrated that heart healthy diets which included lean beef were as effective as the DASH diet for cholesterol management.<sup>6</sup>

Early studies found an association between heart disease and saturated fat. However, more recent studies have found no such association.<sup>7</sup>

Red meat consumption is down; according to Statistics Canada data, red meat consumption declined 14 grams per day between 2004 and 2015.<sup>8</sup>

In contrast, consumption of highly processed ready-to-eat foods is increasing and now accounts for almost 50% of our daily calorie (energy) intake.<sup>9</sup> Fresh red meat contributes only 5% of total calorie intake.<sup>2</sup>

Results from the latest government nutrition survey show that the majority of the calories in the diets of Canadians come from pre-prepared, ready-to-eat dishes such as pizza, burgers, sandwiches and frozen dishes, followed by packaged breads and sweetened drinks. These foods are typically calorie dense and nutritionally poor, and they displace nutrient-rich, whole foods in our diets.<sup>9</sup>

According to the Heart & Stroke Foundation, consuming a balanced diet that includes plenty of vegetables and fruit, whole grains or alternatives, and proteins from various sources (including lean meats), contributes to a decreased risk of heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases.<sup>7</sup>

#### Further Resources:

Cholesterol Card: [http://thinkbeef.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Cholesterol-Card\\_REV\\_3.2018\\_3.pdf](http://thinkbeef.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Cholesterol-Card_REV_3.2018_3.pdf)

Beef Benefits Infographic: <http://thinkbeef.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Beef-Benefits-1024x762.jpg>

Plant-Based Diet: <http://thinkbeef.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Plant-based-Diets-1.pdf>

Meat Consumption: [http://thinkbeef.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/How-much-meat-do-we-eat-the-reality-check\\_3.2018-5.pdf](http://thinkbeef.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/How-much-meat-do-we-eat-the-reality-check_3.2018-5.pdf)

Saturated Fat: <https://canadabeef.ca/makeitbeef/as-the-world-turns-heart-and-stroke-foundations-new-position-on-saturated-fat/>

Beef and Your Heart: <https://canadabeef.ca/beef-and-your-heart/>

#### References:

<sup>1</sup>Red Meat Nutrition Brief, January 2018. Data derived from the 2015 Canadian Community Health Survey – Nutrition.

<sup>2</sup>Fresh and Processed Meat Intake: A Canadian Perspective (2018). Data derived from the 2015 Canadian Community Health Survey – Nutrition.

<sup>3</sup>Health Canada, Canadian Nutrient File, 2015. Food code 6172, beef, composite cuts, steak/roast, lean and fat, cooked.

<sup>4</sup>Health Canada, Canadian Nutrient File, 2015. Food code 851, Chicken, broiler, thigh, meat and skin, roasted.

<sup>5</sup>Rohrmann S et al. Meat consumption and mortality – results from the European Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC). BMC Medicine 2013; 11: 63 (e-pub).

<sup>6</sup>Roussel MA et al. Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet Study: effects on lipids, lipoproteins and apolipoproteins. Am J Clin Nutr 2012; 95(1): 9-16.

<sup>7</sup>Heart & Stroke Foundation Position Statement: Saturated Fat Heart Disease and Stroke. August, 2015.

<sup>8</sup>Fresh Red Meat and Processed Meat Eaten per Day: 2004 vs 2015. Source: 2004 Canadian Community Health Survey - Nutrition; 2015 Canadian Community Health Survey - Nutrition A Canadian Perspective.

<sup>9</sup>Time to curb our appetite for ultra-processed food. Heart & Stroke Foundation News Release. December 5, 2017.

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