



... just the FACTS

Study summaries examining the latest science on beef's place in a healthy diet

EVIDENCE REVIEW CONCLUDES THERE IS NO NEED TO REDUCE RED MEAT CONSUMPTION FOR GOOD HEALTH

STUDY DESIGN:

Guidelines based on a rigorous series of 5 systematic reviews.

OBJECTIVE:

To develop evidence-based guidelines based on a comprehensive review of the relationship between meat consumption and health.

METHODS:

The guidelines were developed using the Nutritional Recommendations (NutriRECS) guideline development process. This entailed rigorous systematic review methodology. GRADE methods were used to rate the certainty of the evidence for each health outcome and to translate the available scientific evidence into recommendations.

RESULTS:

- This review notes: "Current estimates suggest that adults in North America and Europe consume red meat and processed meat about 3 to 4 times per week."
- A meta-analysis of 12 RCTs (~54,000 individuals) did not find a significant association between meat consumption and heart disease, diabetes or cancer.
- Meta-analyses of observational studies found very small absolute risk reduction among those who less red or processed meat; however, the association was very uncertain due to factors such as potential confounding.

STRENGTHS:

These new guidelines are unique in that they take into account the certainty of the evidence, the magnitude of potential benefits and harms, as well as people's values and preferences – all important considerations for evidence-based dietary guidelines.

CONCLUSION:

A comprehensive series of 5 high-quality systematic reviews found little to no health benefits for reducing red meat. Based on the evidence, an expert panel recommends that most people can continue to consume red meat at current average intakes.

Johnston BC et al. Unprocessed red meat and processed meat consumption: dietary guideline recommendations from the Nutritional Recommendations (NutriRECS) Consortium. *Ann Intern Med* 2019;171:756-764