



... just the FACTS

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

WORLDWIDE STUDY SHOWS MEAT-EATING IS ASSOCIATED WITH GREATER LIFE EXPECTANCY

STUDY DESIGN:

A worldwide cross-sectional analysis of meat intake and life expectancy based on ecological data for populations from 175 countries/territories.

OBJECTIVES:

This study examined the association between meat intake and life expectancy based on population data published by United Nations agencies.

DATA:

Population-specific data for 175 countries/territories (approximately 90% of the world population). Total meat intake included all red meat, poultry, game and organ meat, as defined by the UN FAO.

METHODS:

Statistical analyses were conducted using worldwide population-specific data to explore and compare the correlations between meat intake and life expectancy at birth and at 5 years of age. Researchers also evaluated correlations within different geographic regions, and other groupings.

RESULTS:

Worldwide, analyses revealed a strong positive association between meat intake and life expectancy. The positive correlation remained significant after controlling for major potential confounding factors such as calorie intakes, obesity, wealth, and education level.

- Greater meat intake correlates with greater life expectancy, based on many different analyses. The authors note:
 - Meat intake explains at least 50% of the variance in life expectancy.
 - Meat intake correlates with life expectancy due to nutrient effects beyond energy.
- In contrast, carbohydrate crop intakes (cereal grains, starchy roots and sugars) do not correlate with greater life expectancy.

Worth Noting: This study found that in countries with a Mediterranean diet, life expectancy is greater when there is more meat in the diet.

CONCLUSIONS:

This worldwide study indicates that meat intake is a significant predictor of life expectancy. Multiple analyses of data from over 170 countries show higher meat intake correlates with better life expectancy.

The authors note: Having considered populations across the globe, their study has the advantage in overcoming common biases in studies with limited sample sizes.

FOR YOUR PRACTICE:

This study suggests that meat-eating benefits people's health, leading to greater longevity. Meat has been an important component of the human diet for millions of years. Meat is a nutrient-dense source of complete protein, and many essential vitamins and minerals such as iron, zinc and several B-vitamins.

You W, Henneberg R, Saniotis A, Ge Y, and Henneberg M. Total meat intake is associated with life expectancy: A cross-sectional data analysis of 175 contemporary populations. *Int J Gen Med* 2022;15:1833-1851.

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