

# Light Side

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## WHERE'S THE BEEF?

Cooking protein-rich foods like meat, poultry and fish at very high temperatures can create chemicals that scientists hypothesize may increase cancer risk. However, the potential risks to human health are inconclusive. Heterocyclic amines (HCAs) are compounds of protein that form on charred meats. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are compounds of fat drippings that form when meat is cooked over open flames and produces smoke. HCA and PAH formation can occur in any protein that is charred or overcooked with any cooking method at very high temperatures.

Consumers can feel good about grilling, a naturally lowfat method of dry heat cookery, for their favorite meats by monitoring heat levels and doneness, with a few simple and safe tips:

**Trim, if Necessary.** Prevent fire flare-ups and excess smoke formation while grilling by trimming any excess fat from meat and poultry.

**Savor the Flavor.** Marinades add flavor to meat and poultry and can tenderize less tender cuts of meat. In addition, marinades with little or no sugar may help protect meat from charring and have also been shown to reduce HCA formation.

- Before cooking, remove meat from marinade and pat dry with a paper towel to promote even browning and prevent steaming.
- Sugary sauces and glazes can burn easily and cause charring. If using these types of products, baste during the last few minutes of grilling and avoid charring.

**The Heat is On... Medium!** Use medium heat while cooking to ensure delicious, flavorful meat. High heat can overcook or char the outside of meat while the interior remains underdone.

- Charcoal grilling: Medium heat is achieved when coals are no longer flaming, and are ash-covered and spread in a single layer. Check



cooking temperature by cautiously holding the palm of your hand above the coals at cooking height. Count the number of seconds you can hold your hand in that position before the heat forces you to pull it away; approximately 4 seconds for medium heat.

- Gas grilling: Consult the owner's manual for specific information about preparing the grill for medium heat since gas grill brands vary greatly.

**Determine Doneness.** Lean meat's tender, juicy texture is optimum when cooked to medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness. Cook burgers to medium (160°F) doneness, until no longer pink in the center and juices show no pink color.

- Insert an instant-read thermometer horizontally into the side of burgers and steaks to check doneness.
- Place the thermometer in the thickest part or center of the burger or steak. For steaks, the thermometer should not touch bone, fat or the grill.
- Don't Play With the Meat. Turn beef occasionally for even cooking and browning.
- Use a spatula to turn burgers and tongs to turn steaks and kabobs. Do not press, flatten or pierce the meat — flavorful juices will be lost.

**Go Lean.** There are 29 beef cuts that meet government guidelines for "lean" with less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3-1/2-ounce serving.

- Choose from traditional favorites like flank steak, tenderloin, 95 percent lean ground beef and T-bone steak.

## Iowa Beef Facts

- ◆ In Iowa, 40,000 jobs are related to the beef industry.
- ◆ Cash receipts from cattle and calves in Iowa totaled \$2.6 billion in 2006.
- ◆ Cattle raised in Iowa consumed 148 million bushels of corn in 2006.
- ◆ Roughly 16,892,894 people can be fed with the beef produced in Iowa every year.
- ◆ Beef demand has increased 15% since 1998.
- ◆ More than 4,500 new beef products have been introduced since 1998.
- ◆ Beef is consumed 77.8 million times each day across America.
- ◆ Beef is the #1 food source for protein, vitamin b12 and zinc.
- ◆ Nine out of ten households will eat beef at home in the next two weeks. That's 251 million people.
- ◆ According to consumers, beef tenderness has improved 25% since 1998.
- ◆ Iowa's beef industry contributes \$5.1 Billion in business activity to Iowa's economy.



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# Walking 101

If you prefer a simple approach to fitness, try walking. This basic exercise method is accessible, effective and rewarding.

## The First Step

As an aerobic exercise, walking offers countless health benefits, including heart-healthy perks such as lower blood pressure and cholesterol. It reduces the risk of diabetes, aids in weight loss, improves muscle strength and tone and, as with any exercise regimen, causes mental fitness to skyrocket. This low-impact activity can be enjoyed alone or in the company of friends. Virtually anyone can do it, anywhere!

All you need to kick off your walking routine is a decent pair of shoes (they should be supportive, fit adequately in the toe box, and feel snug at the heel), along with proper socks (cotton/acrylic blends are recommended) and a spark of motivation. After you've started, your own progress will fuel and inspire your exercise each day.

Begin your walking routine with a warm-up and simple stretches. Then pick up the pace and aim for 20-30 minutes of brisk walking, followed by a cool-down and more gentle stretching. Walking 3-5 times a week will produce results, although it's likely that before long, you'll want to add it to your daily routine.



## Making Strides

You may find it useful to chart your progress. This makes it easy for you to increase intensity and duration gradually and to see the improvements you're making. Get creative with your walking regimen. Try incorporating light hand weights, varying speeds and new routes. Feeling really inspired? Look for somewhat hilly terrain. The resistance will burn more calories and produce increased strength and endurance in even less time.

If you are new to exercise, be sure to pay especially close attention to the signals your body is sending you. Do not ignore pain. The last thing you want is a pesky injury to hinder your hard-earned improvements.

Walking is clearly a great way to get your body moving. It is effective in and of itself, and it is a springboard to endless possibilities for continued fitness and exercise. Be proud of the results you achieve, and most of all, enjoy the steps you take to get there.

## Cumin Beef Kabobs

- 1 pound lean beef (top sirloin or sirloin tip), well trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup low sodium soy sauce
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp ground cumin
- 8 small bamboo skewers
- 16 cherry tomatoes
- 1 small onion cut into 16 small pieces

Prepare barbecue. Thread beef onto 8 skewers, threading 2 tomatoes and 2 onion pieces onto each. Grill until beef is tender, turning occasionally, about 6 minutes for medium rare.

4 servings

Calories: 180 Fat: 5g Saturated fat: 2g  
Carbohydrates: 2g Fiber: 1g  
Sodium: 570mg



## Italian Pork Chops

### Marinade:

- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. Italian seasonings
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 3/4 cup Worcestershire
- 1 tsp olive oil

- 6 (3-4 oz ea) pork loins
- 1/4 cup egg substitute
- 1/4 cup skim milk
- 1 cup Italian bread crumbs

Blend together the marinade ingredients. Marinate the pork in the mixture for 1 hour on each side. Blend together the egg and milk, and dredge the marinated meat through the mixture. Roll the pork loins on all sides in the breadcrumbs. Grill 15-20 minutes, turning once.

Serves 6

Calories: 290 Fat: 10g Saturated fat: 3.5g  
Carbs: 21g Fiber: 1g Sodium: 750mg

## Newton Farmer's Market

Catch Skiff Medical Center's Wellness team at the Newton Farmer's Market from 4—6:30pm on June 16, July 21, August 18 and September 15. Healthy recipes and produce samples will be provided.



*On the Light Side* is written by Registered Dietitian Jenny Thompson.

Interested in Skiff Medical Center Wellness programs? Contact 791-4303.