



ICAR-National Research Centre on Meat

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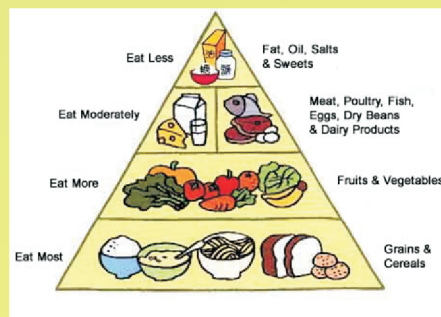
MEAT AND HEALTH

- Food and exercise are crucial to our general health and well being. Making the right choice of foods with balanced nutrients and taking regular exercise can protect against many health problems and life style related disorders.
- Healthy and balanced diets should include lean meat in moderate amounts, together with starchy carbohydrates (including whole grain foods), plenty of fruits and vegetables and moderate amount of milk and dairy foods.
- Humans are well equipped to make full use of the nutrients found in meat. Our digestive system reflects a genetic adaptation to an omnivorous diet, with animal foods as an important source of proteins.
- Lean meat is a nutrients dense food containing an average of 20% proteins, 3-5% fat and good amount of essential amino acids, fatty acids and minerals.
- Meat can make a significant contribution to the diet, especially for those groups in the population that are known to have poor intake of essential nutrients. Meat consumption in India is around 5 kg per person per year, while it is 80-100 kg in developed countries.

LET FOOD BE THE MEDICINE



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- **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommends a daily intake of a minimum one gm of protein per kg body weight. Protein is essential for growth, maintenance and the repair of the body and can also provide energy. Meat proteins are superior to the plant proteins due to the superior amino acids composition and high biological value.**
- **Vitamin B12 is present only in foods of animal origin and its deficiency causes pernicious anaemia in human beings.**
- **Meat is an excellent source of trace minerals such as iron, copper, zinc and manganese. Iron from meat is absorbed 3 to 5 times more readily than from plant foods and it also enhances the absorption of iron from non-meat sources.**
- **The total fat content of lean meat of Indian meat animals is between 3 and 5 %. Chicken, pork, fish and liver contain high levels of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA), which are necessary for brain development in children and they reduce the risk of heart diseases in adults.**
- **Sheep, goat and buffalo meat are rich in conjugated linoleic acids (CLA) which have good anticarcinogenic, antidiabetic and antiatherogenic effects, in addition to beneficial effects on immune system, bone metabolism and body composition.**
- **Cholesterol is essential for the synthesis of vitamin D, bile acids for fat digestion and steroid hormones for performing vital body functions. The cholesterol content (mg per 100 gram) of animal foods is : Meat and poultry – 60- 120; egg – 450; fish – 50 and brain – 2000 – 3000.**
- **Meat based bioactive compounds such as histidyl dipeptides, carnitine, carnosine etc. have excellent health benefits like improving skeletal strength, prevention of hypertension and aging related to oxidative stress.**
- **Chilled and frozen meat is not a stale meat. In fact, chilling of meat improves its flavour and tenderness. There is no loss of nutrients during freezing. Proper cold chain management is crucial for chilled and frozen meats.**

