

# Red Meat May Increase the Risk of Death From 9 Diseases

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Watch out, steak lovers! Yet another study has linked consumption of red meat with an increased risk of death. In fact, according to new findings published in the journal *BMJ*, this dietary habit could boost mortality rates for nine different medical conditions, [The New York Times reports](#).

For the study, researchers tracked diet and health information for more than 536,000 men and women ages 50 to 71 spanning an average of 16 years. Scientists used a 124-item food frequency questionnaire, reviewed individuals' total intake of meat, including processed and unprocessed red meat (such as beef, lamb and pork) and white meat (poultry and fish). In addition, researchers logged everyone's daily intake of heme iron (the type found in blood and muscle), nitrates, nitrites and several other nutritional variables.

At the end of the trial period, findings showed that compared with the one fifth of people who ate the least red meat, the same number of people who ate the most red meat appeared to suffer a 26 percent increased risk of death from cancer, heart disease, respiratory disease, stroke, diabetes, infections, Alzheimer's disease, kidney disease and liver cancer.

In contrast, findings showed that white meat might be good for you. According to additional findings, researchers noted that those who ate the highest proportion of white meat enjoyed a 25 percent reduced risk of dying from various causes compared with those who ate the least white meat.

"This is the largest study, so far, to show increased mortality risks from different causes associated with both processed and unprocessed red meat, and it underlines the importance of heme iron, nitrates, and nitrites in assessing the pathways related to health risks associated with red meat intake," wrote study authors.

The observational study had some limitations, such as possible measurement errors and the use of a single dietary assessment instead of tracking dietary changes during the follow-up period. But researchers said the findings were valuable because the 16-year window provided numbers that showed the occurrence of many different causes of death among the meat eaters studied.

[Click here](#) to learn more about how red meat is bad for your health.

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