What Science Says About
Beef’s Naturally Nutrient-Rich Package

NUTRIENT-RICH PACKAGE

Nutrient-Rich Diets May Contribute to Lower Risks of Mortality
Research reinforces the positive role nutrient-rich foods play in the diet. A study, which examined the health benefits of dietary patterns that follow current dietary guidelines and includes multiple nutrients, suggests women who follow diets including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lowfat dairy and lean meats – or naturally nutrient-rich foods – have a lower risk of mortality.
* Calorie-for-calorie, beef is one of the most naturally nutrient-rich foods. A 3-ounce serving of lean beef is an excellent source of protein, zinc, vitamin B₁₂, selenium and phosphorus; and a good source of niacin, vitamin B₆, iron and riboflavin.

LEAN BEEF AND HEART HEALTH

Healthy Beef = Healthy Heart
A review of 54 studies provides substantial evidence that lean red meat, trimmed of visible fat, does not raise total blood cholesterol or LDL (bad) cholesterol levels. When consumed as part of a diet low in saturated fat, lean, trimmed beef does not increase cardiovascular risk factors (plasma cholesterol levels or thrombotic risk factors).
* Twenty-nine cuts of beef 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-ounce serving.

Lean Beef and Chicken Play an Equal Role in Cholesterol Reduction
Research indicates that moderately overweight women who consumed lean beef or chicken as part of a nutritionally balanced, calorie-reduced diet, in conjunction with a fitness walking program, successfully lost weight, lowered total cholesterol, lowered LDL (bad) cholesterol, maintained HDL (good) cholesterol, and reduced body fat.
* All of the 29 lean beef cuts have, on average, only one more gram of saturated fat than a skinless chicken breast, per 3-ounce serving. In addition, each lean beef cut is a nutrient powerhouse with seven times more vitamin B₁₂, six times more zinc and three times more iron than the same size serving of a skinless chicken breast.

CONJUGATED LINOLEIC ACID

CLA and Cancer Protection
Beef is a natural source of the polyunsaturated fatty acid conjugated linoleic acid (CLA). While research on CLA is still evolving, a body of evidence suggests this compound may have cancer-fighting properties, as well as positive effects on cardiovascular disease, body composition, insulin resistance, immune function and bone health.
* Lean beef is one of the most common natural sources of CLA and is estimated to provide more than 30 percent of current CLA in the American diet.
SELENIUM

Investigating the Cancer-Protective Properties of Selenium
Selenium is an antioxidant found in beef that helps protect the body from the damaging effects of free radicals. The Nutritional Prevention of Cancer Trial showed that men who took selenium supplements for more than 7½ years had 52 percent fewer new cases of prostate cancer than men who took a placebo. These results contributed to the National Cancer Institute initiating the Selenium and Vitamin E Cancer Prevention Trial (SELECT), which is currently underway.
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 35 micrograms of selenium or 26 percent of the Daily Value.

PROTEIN

Muscle
Protein, Muscle Maintenance and Sarcopenia Prevention
The most practical means of increasing skeletal muscle protein for the majority of older adults is to include a moderate serving of high-quality protein in each meal. Recent data suggests a moderate 113 gram (4 ounce) serving of intact protein such as lean meat contains sufficient amino acids to acutely increase muscle protein synthesis by approximately 50 percent without exercise. Paddon-Jones D, Short K, Campbell W, Volpi E, Wolfe R. Role of dietary protein in the sarcopenia of aging. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2008. 87 (suppl): 1562S-6S.
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 25.4 grams of protein or 51 percent of the Daily Value.

Beef Up with Lean Protein
A research review, “The Underappreciated Role of Muscle in Health and Disease,” published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition indicated that increasing daily high-quality protein intake may optimize muscle strength and metabolism, and ultimately improve overall health. A growing body of evidence suggests muscle metabolism may also play a role in the prevention of many chronic diseases, such as type-2 diabetes and osteoporosis. Eating at least 15 grams of essential amino acids at each meal, equivalent to four ounces of a high-quality protein like lean meat, may help maintain muscle mass, and provide strength to lead an active lifestyle.
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Live Well and Age Vibrantly with Lean Beef
A research study, “Aging Does Not Impair the Anabolic Response to a Protein-Rich Meal,” examined the role of beef in stimulating muscle growth in older Americans, which is critical to helping people avoid bone fracturing, and live well and independently as they age. The study found that consuming four ounces of lean beef protein each day can help enhance muscle development by 50 percent. These results suggest that consuming an adequate amount of lean protein can lead to an improved ability to increase or maintain muscle mass, and as a result, may delay the onset of sarcopenia or loss of muscle.
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 25.4 grams of protein or 51 percent of the Daily Value.
**PROTEIN, continued**

**Weight Management**

**Weight Management and Satiety**
Research has shown high protein meals increase thermogenesis and energy expenditure. Animal protein had a greater positive effect than plant proteins. There is general consensus that permanent weight reduction is difficult to achieve with radical diet and lifestyle changes. A moderately higher-protein, energy-controlled diet may represent a feasible lifestyle adaptation that is more likely to result in improved weight loss and management.


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**Satisfy Hunger with High-Quality Protein**
Numerous studies have shown that dietary protein is more satiating than carbohydrates and fat. A study, “Inadequate Dietary Protein Increases Hunger and Desire to Eat in Younger and Older Men,” published in the *Journal of Nutrition* showed that protein intake below the Recommended Dietary Allowance can lead to increased hunger and a desire to eat among men.


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**Moderately Higher-Protein Diet Boosts Benefit of Exercise**
Research shows exercise is more effective when coupled with a moderately high-protein diet. A study, from the *Journal of Nutrition* demonstrated that a protein-rich diet with reduced carbohydrates, combined with exercise additively improved body composition during weight loss, reduced triglyceride levels and maintained higher HDL (good) cholesterol levels. Researchers concluded that the protein-rich diet is successful in maintaining muscle mass while burning fat because high-quality protein foods, like beef, contain high levels of the amino acid leucine, which works with insulin to promote muscle growth.


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**Higher-Protein Diet May Boost Metabolism and Other Benefits**
A clinical trial examined the effects of protein on body composition, cardiovascular disease risk, nutritional status, bone turnover, and kidney function in 100 obese women. Researchers found that people on the higher-protein diet (34% protein/46% carbohydrate/20% fat) lost more fat mass and achieved nutritional benefits either equal to or greater than those on the higher-carbohydrate diet (17% protein/64% carbohydrate/20% fat). In particular the higher-protein diet is associated with greater reduction in triglyceride concentration and improvements in hemoglobin and vitamin B12 status. There was no evidence of adverse effects on bone health or kidney function.


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Higher Protein Intake is Associated with Less Belly Fat
Abdominal obesity, or a “beer belly,” is significantly related to morbidity and mortality. It is unknown exactly why certain people tend to gain fat in the belly area, but a study may give insight as to how to avoid this. A cross-sectional study found that those who had the highest proportion of energy intake (or calories) from protein also had the lowest waist-hip ratio. Thus, replacing protein for carbohydrates may help to reduce stomach fat.


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Study Shows that High-Protein, Low-Fat Diets Promote Healthful Weight Loss
A study in the Journal of Nutrition tested a higher-protein, low-fat diet compared with a higher-carbohydrate, low-fat diet, and found equally favorable results. Both diets reduced cholesterol levels, body weight, and body fat mass equally. However, those on the higher-protein diet did not complain of hunger and were much more satisfied than those on the higher-carbohydrate diet.


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Protein-Rich Diets Aid Weight Loss
Research has shed light on why moderately high-protein diets may be beneficial for weight loss and muscle maintenance. The study theorizes that, due to the amino acid leucine found in protein-rich foods such as beef, increasing the proportion of protein to carbohydrates in the diets of adult women may have positive effects on body composition, blood lipids, glucose homeostasis and satiety during weight loss.


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Rest Easy with Protein
A Dutch study reports that consuming nearly a third of daily calories as lean protein, such as lean meat or skinless poultry, boosts a person’s metabolism during the day – and while sleeping. The result is from protein’s ability to increase satiety to a greater extent than carbohydrate and fat and can therefore reduce energy intake.


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Bone Strength
Calcium is Not Enough When it Comes to Bone Health
A study confirms that middle-aged people who eat more protein-rich foods, such as beef, have fewer hip fractures resulting from osteoporosis. These findings support the hypothesis that adequate dietary protein is important for optimal bone health which can have a significant impact on overall health and independence.


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PROTEIN, continued

Bone Mineral Content with Protein
Protein and calcium intake interact positively to affect bone health, and intakes of both must be adequate to fully realize the benefit of each nutrient on bone. Optimal protein intake for bone health is likely higher than current recommended intakes, particularly for the elderly. Some studies found meat as a protein source is associated with higher blood levels of insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1), which is associated with increased bone mineralization and fewer fractures.


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Heart Health

Heart Disease and Diabetes Prevention
Protein intake higher than the RDA may help adults prevent or manage cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. Diets with increased protein and reduced carbohydrates have also been investigated for treatment of type 2 diabetes with positive effects on glycemic regulation. Studies evaluating health risks across the range of protein intakes found individuals with the highest protein intake had the lowest risk for CHD and the highest quality diets. Earlier associations of dietary protein or protein foods with CHD may have been due to coincidental relationships with other modern lifestyle factors, such as total energy intake, daily physical activity, stress, inconsistent meal patterns and convenience foods.


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Optimal Health
A study assessed protein quality and dietary recommendations and found increasingly complex roles for protein and amino acids in, among other health benefits, regulating body composition and bone health, gastrointestinal function and bacterial flora and satiety. The research report found protein quality is as important as adequate quantity to achieve optimal health. Animal protein foods such as beef, pork, eggs, fish, poultry and dairy products are essential sources of high-quality protein. There is strong emerging evidence of a positive role for protein in promoting optimal health at intakes beyond the RDA of 0.8 g/kg/day.
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 25.4 grams of protein or 51 percent of the Daily Value.

ZINC

Get Tweens to Think with Zinc
Seventh graders who consumed an additional 20 milligrams of zinc, beyond their normal diet, each school day for 10 weeks scored better on visual memory and word recognition tasks, as well as functions requiring sustained attention and vigilance, than their counterparts who consumed less zinc. Penland JG, Lukaski HC, Gray JS. Zinc affects cognition and psychosocial function of middle school children. Abstract presented at the American Society of Nutritional Sciences, Experimental Biology 2005 Conference. April 4, 2005; San Diego, CA.
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 5.76 milligrams of zinc or 38 percent of the Daily Value.

Build Better Brains with Beef
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 5.76 milligrams of zinc or 38 percent of the Daily Value.

IRON

Overweight Toddlers are at Higher Risk for Iron Deficiency
A study published in *Pediatrics* found that overweight 1- to 3-year-olds, who are not in daycare, are at higher risk for iron deficiency. Researchers think this may be due to extended breastfeeding without introduction of iron-rich foods, or inadequate intake of iron-rich foods once the child is weaned. This is an important public health issue as 4 million U.S. children are iron-deficient, and childhood iron-deficiency anemia is associated with behavioral and cognitive delays.
* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 2.54 milligrams of iron or 14 percent of the Daily Value.

Higher Cognitive Ability Related to Iron-Sufficient Infants
Researchers found that, even though children received iron therapy in infancy which corrected their iron deficiency anemia in all cases, iron-deficient children had lower motor scores than their iron-sufficient counterparts when tested in infancy, at age 5, and in early adolescence. The difference in motor scores remained constant throughout these life stages.
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**Iron Boosts Mother/Baby Bonding**
Iron deficiency may impair crucial mother-baby interactions. Researchers found mildly iron-deficient mothers were less sensitive to their babies’ cues, were less likely to give their babies the chances to lead interactions, often interrupted play at inappropriate times, and appeared bored or distant more frequently than mothers with adequate iron levels.

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**Ironing Out Postpartum Depression**
Postpartum stress and depression, are estimated to affect 40 percent of U.S. pregnancies each year. Researchers found that anemic new mothers taking iron supplements experienced a 25 percent reduction in depression and stress.

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**Iron to Battle ADHD**
A report in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* found that 84 percent of children studied who had Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) also had abnormal iron stores. In addition, researchers found the children with the lowest iron stores had the most severe ADHD symptoms. Researchers suggest these children could benefit from additional iron intake.

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**Lean Beef: Smart Food for Teens**
According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, diets rich in lean beef can help teenagers maintain their levels of useable iron, teach important balanced eating habits, and dispel misperceptions that healthy diets can’t taste good.

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**Lean Meat Critical First Food for Breastfed Infants**
A research review in the *Journal of Nutrition* found that iron- and zinc-rich meats are important first-foods for breastfed infants to provide essential micronutrients. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the World Health Organization and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all recommend meat as a complementary food to ensure that breastfed infants consume adequate amounts of these important nutrients.

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B VITAMINS

Bone Up with $B_{12}$
The Framingham Osteoporosis Study examined the relationship between vitamin $B_{12}$ blood levels and indicators of bone health in 2,576 men and women, aged 30-87. Researchers found that those with vitamin $B_{12}$ concentrations below 148 picomoles per liter (pM/L) had significantly lower average bone mineral density – at the hip in men and at the spine in women – than those with higher concentrations of the nutrient.


Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Diet Impairs Vitamin $B_{12}$ Status
Pregnant women who followed a vegetarian diet that included eggs and dairy products, but no meat, had an increased risk of vitamin $B_{12}$ deficiency, which is a risk factor for neural tube defects. In addition, breast-fed infants of a vitamin $B_{12}$ deficient mother are at greater risk for developmental abnormalities, impaired growth and anemia.


Vitamin $B_{12}$ Protects Brain Power
In a study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition,* seniors with low vitamin $B_{12}$ status but high serum folate were more likely to experience anemia and cognitive impairment. When vitamin $B_{12}$ status was normal, however, high serum folate was associated with protection against cognitive impairment.


Additional B Vitamin Added to the Alzheimer’s Prevention Arsenal
While vitamins $B_{12}$, $B_{6}$ and folate have been shown to have positive effects on dementia, research found that people consuming more than 22.4 milligrams of niacin, or vitamin $B_{3}$, from food daily were 80 percent less likely to suffer Alzheimer’s disease and age-related cognitive decline than their counterparts.


* A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 2.24 micrograms of vitamin $B_{12}$ or 37 percent of the Daily Value; 3.4 milligrams of niacin (vitamin $B_{3}$) or 17 percent of the Daily Value; and .297 micrograms of vitamin $B_{6}$ or 15 percent of the Daily Value.

For more beef nutrition and science information visit [www.BeefNutrition.org](http://www.BeefNutrition.org)