



## Meatless Monday: Protect Your Health, One Day Each Week

As rates of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, and other life-threatening conditions skyrocket in the United States, many researchers and medical experts come to the same conclusion: **eating less meat can prevent—and even reverse—many of the nation’s most common illnesses.**

### Obesity

- **Those eating less meat have significantly lower body mass indices.**<sup>i</sup> A plant-based diet is a great source of fiber, absent in animal products. Eating fiber makes you feel full with fewer calories.
- **Avid meat eaters gained more weight over 5 years than those who ate less meat but the same amount of calories.** When the researchers looked at different types of meat, they found **the strongest association with weight gain was poultry**, followed by processed meats and red meat.<sup>ii</sup>

### Heart Disease and Diabetes

- **Eating high quantities of fatty red and processed meats substantially increases the risk of death from heart disease (and cancer).**<sup>iii</sup> Reducing saturated fats can help lower cholesterol and reduce this risk, and fortunately, plant foods contain little to no saturated fats. **Replacing meat with plant foods, even just once a week, can decrease mortality risk by up to 19%.**<sup>iv</sup>
- The cholesterol found in **eating an egg a day shortens a woman's life as much as smoking 5 cigarettes a day for 15 years** (or 25,000 cigarettes).<sup>v</sup>
- Choosing vegetarian foods can **reduce risk of metabolic syndrome, a cluster of disorders associated with a heightened risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.**<sup>vi</sup>

### Cancer

- At least 33% of annual cancer deaths in the US are due to dietary factors.<sup>vii</sup> **Studies show that consumption of red meat increases colon cancer risk and processed meat increases colorectal cancer risk;** in addition, meat may be treated with carcinogenic preservatives.<sup>viii</sup>
- A British study of more than 35,000 women showed that **those who ate the most meat had the highest breast cancer risk.**<sup>ix</sup>

### Women’s/Men’s Health

- Up to 8 million US women—1 out of 9—suffer from painful and persistent urinary tract infections (UTI) each year. **Studies have linked these UTIs to a newly antibiotic-resistant strain of E. coli, believed to spread through poultry raised with the routine use of antibiotics.**<sup>x</sup>
- Scientific evidence shows that **animal protein can also cause problems for men—including impotence, prostate and penile cancer, smaller penis size, breast growth, and infertility.**<sup>xi</sup>

### Public Health

- **Factory farmed animals receive 80% of antibiotics sold in the US.**<sup>xii</sup> They are given the antibiotics to promote growth and minimize illnesses that are easily spread in conditions of intensive confinement. Resulting antibiotic-resistant bacterial strains, such as salmonella, E.coli, and listeria, are increasingly found in animal products and jeopardize the ability of antibiotics to treat humans.
- Intensively confining and overcrowding animals creates ideal environments for the **mutation and transmission of deadly viruses such as bird flu and swine flu.**<sup>xiii</sup>

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- <sup>i</sup> S. Tonstad, T. Butler, R. Yan, and G. E. Fraser. Type of vegetarian diet, body weight, and prevalence of type 2 diabetes. *Diabetes Care*. 32(5). 791-796, 2009. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19351712>>.
- <sup>ii</sup> "Meat lovers gain more weight over time: study." *Reuters*. 20 July 2010. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/07/21/us-meat-weight-idUSTRE66K07A20100721>>.
- <sup>iii</sup> "Eating red meat raises 'substantial' risk of cancer or heart disease death." *The Guardian*. 12 Mar 2012. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2012/mar/12/red-meat-death-heart-cancer>>.
- <sup>iv</sup> Datz, Todd. "2012 Press Releases: Red Meat Consumption Linked to Increased Risk of Total, Cardiovascular, and Cancer Mortality." *Harvard School of Public Medicine*. Harvard School of Public Medicine, 12 Mar 2012. <<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/2012-releases/red-meat-cardiovascular-cancer-mortality.html>>.
- <sup>v</sup> Baer HJ, Glynn RJ, Hu FB, Hankinson SE, Willett WC, Colditz GA, Stampfer M, Rosner B. Risk factors for mortality in the nurses' health study: a competing risks analysis. *American Journal of Epidemiology*. 2011 Feb 1; 173(3):319-29. <<http://aje.oxfordjournals.org/content/173/3/319.full.pdf+html>>.
- <sup>vi</sup> Rizzo, Nico S., Joan Sabaté, et al. "Vegetarian dietary patterns are associated with a lower risk of metabolic syndrome." *Diabetes Care*. 34.5 (2011): 1225-1227. <<http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/34/5/1225.full.pdf.html>>.
- <sup>vii</sup> . "Heathy Eatin for Life." *The Cancer Project*. The Cancer Project, 2004. <[http://www.cancerproject.org/resources/pdfs/HealthyEatingforLife\\_Update.pdf](http://www.cancerproject.org/resources/pdfs/HealthyEatingforLife_Update.pdf)>.
- <sup>viii</sup> . "Recommendations for Cancer Prevention." *American Institute for Cancer Research*. 2012. <[http://preventcancer.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=recommendations\\_05\\_red\\_meat](http://preventcancer.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=recommendations_05_red_meat)>.
- <sup>ix</sup> Taylor, E F, V J Burley, , et al. "Meat consumption and risk of breast cancer in the UK Women's Cohort Study." *British Journal of Cancer*. 96.7 (2007): 1139-1146. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2360120/>>.
- <sup>x</sup> McKenna, Maryn. "How Your Chicken Dinner is Creating a Drug-Resistant Superbug." *The Atlantic*. N.p., 11 06 2012. <<http://m.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2012/07/how-your-chicken-dinner-is-creating-a-drug-resistant-superbug/259700/>>.
- <sup>xi</sup> "Causing Impotence and Infertility, Meat No Longer a Metaphor for Masculinity." *Voices of Compassion*. Compassion Over Killing , 11 Jul 2012. <<http://www.cok.net/blog/2012/07/causing-impotence-and-infertility-meat-no-longer-metaphor-masculinity>>.
- <sup>xii</sup> McKenna, Maryn. "Update: Farm Animals Get 80 Percent of Antibiotics Sold in U.S.." *Wired Science Blogs*. 24 12 2012. <<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2010/12/news-update-farm-animals-get-80-of-antibiotics-sold-in-us/>>.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Nijman, Shari. "HEALTH: Flu Fuels Concerns about 'Factory Farms'." *Inter Press Service News Agency*. 15 05 2009. <<http://www.ipsnews.net/2009/05/health-flu-fuels-concerns-about-factory-farms/>>.