



Eat Less Red Meat

CHALLENGE

Eat healthier alternatives to protect your health

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Eat Less Red Meat.”
2. Eat less red meat on at least 22 days this month.
3. Keep a record of your completed challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When 22-year-old California resident Tyler Wormhoudt walked into The Big Texan Steak Ranch in Amarillo, Texas, meat was on his mind. He didn’t bother

to page through the menu. He skipped over the salad selection. He didn’t even ask about low-calorie options.

Instead, Tyler took a seat and quietly told the server what he wanted. “I’d like to try the 72-ounce Steak Challenge,” he said. The server relayed the order to the kitchen. The cooks went to work prepping a plate with shrimp cocktail, baked potato, salad, and roll with butter. But the meal wasn’t complete until the 4.5-pound steak was done.

Tyler picked up a fork and a knife and started eating. He plowed through the shrimp, potato, salad, and roll. And then he moved on to the meat. In just under an hour, Tyler polished off the last bite. Even though cleaning his plate meant he didn’t have to pay \$72 for the meal, it was hardly a victory.

“I do not recommend this to anyone,” he said.

And that’s good advice. Research shows that eating red meat is bad for your health.¹ You might not be hungry for a 72-ounce steak. But even eating small amounts of red meat has been linked to a long list of chronic diseases. Want to be healthier and live longer? Take the month long health challenge to *Eat Less Red Meat*.

Meaty Matters: How much do you know about the health risks of eating red meat? Take the quiz to find out:



- | | T | F | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red meat contains chemical compounds that can harden or clog arteries, damage the heart, and cause other health problems. |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The risk for type 2 diabetes goes up based on the amount of red or processed meat consumed. |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red meat contains vitamins and nutrients your body needs. It can help you live longer. |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cutting back on red meat just one day a week can improve your health. |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Eating a plant-based diet lowers the risk for chronic disease and improves mortality. |

How did you do? If you answered any of the statements incorrectly, take some time to learn more about how to *Eat Less Red Meat*. Research shows that eating red or processed meat can shorten your lifespan.² Red meat is high in protein, but you can get the protein you need from foods like whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. Eating more plant-based foods and less red meat also lowers your risk for chronic disease.

Answers: 1. True. 2. True. 3. True. 4. False. 5. True.

Red Meat and Your Health

If you’ve been thinking about taking a road trip to The Big Texan Steak Ranch (for the salad, right?), take a minute to learn a little more about red meat and your health. Make no bones about it. Research shows eating red meat puts your health at risk in more ways than one.

What’s the beef with red meat?
tinyurl.com/p7kxaua

Eating red meat (traditional cuts or processed meats) raises the risk for:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ✓ Diabetes | ✓ Certain types of cancer |
| ✓ Heart disease | ✓ Digestive problems |
| ✓ Heart failure | ✓ Exposure to hormones and antibiotics used to raise livestock |
| ✓ Stroke | ✓ Early death |
| ✓ Exposure to harmful bacteria | |

Ways to Eat Less Red Meat

If you're looking for ways to eat less red meat to improve your diet and overall health, here are five things you can do:

1. Practice Meatless Mondays

It doesn't have to be Monday. Pick one day a week that works for you. Plan out meals and snacks for the day (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds). And make sure meat isn't on the menu.

Try these Meatless Monday recipes tinyurl.com/y7qhdfan

"An optimal diet for preventing disease is a whole-foods, plant-based diet that is naturally low in animal protein, harmful fats, and refined carbohydrates," says Dr. Dean Ornish. "What that means in practice is little or no red meat, mostly vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, and soy products in their natural forms."

2. Consider the environmental impact

Buying a steak or hamburger might be easy and convenient. But did you know red meat production has a major impact on the environment?⁴ Growing food to feed livestock in the U.S. takes 167 million pounds of pesticides. About 17 billion pounds of fertilizer are used to grow feed. And it takes an estimated 1,799 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef.

Researchers also believe raising livestock for meat contributes about 20 percent to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.

3. Stop eating processed meats

Not all red meat is created equal. If you're taking baby steps to eat less red meat, start by giving up processed meats:

- Hot dogs
- Corned beef
- Cold cuts
- Canned meats
- Sausages

These meats are made from a variety of ingredients, including meat trimmings. It's treated with ammonia gas or citric acid to kill bacteria. Then it's shaped into food with a cocktail of chemicals. And it's been linked to higher rates of heart disease and diabetes than traditional cuts of meat.⁵

4. Cut red meat servings in half

That might not be enough if you're Tyler Wormhoudt ordering a 32-ounce steak instead of the 72-ounce Steak Challenge. But for most people, cutting red meat intake in half can make a difference.

Why eating less red meat is good for your family tinyurl.com/y739jncm

- Order a single cheeseburger instead of a double.
- Split a bowl of pasta and meatballs with someone else.
- Eat salad, fruit, vegetables, and side dishes before putting meat on your plate.
- Try a garden burger instead of a hamburger once in a while.



Burger King: Veggie Burger
Burgerville: Bean Burger
Carl's Jr.: Veg It® Burger
Wendy's: Black Bean Burger
White Castle: Veggie Slider

5. Try vegetarian recipes

If you're not used to eating a plant-based diet, you might wonder if a meatless meal can taste good. But you won't know until you try it. Many of your favorite dishes with meat, probably have a vegetarian alternative. Look up a vegetarian recipe and give it a try. You could also visit a vegetarian restaurant or ask a friend who follows a plant-based diet for help. When you eat less red meat, you'll feel better, be healthier, and live longer.

The Power of a Plant-Based Diet

If you want to protect your health and live longer, eating a plant-based diet is a good practice. One recent study looked at the eating habits of 170,000 people.³ Those who ate a lot of meat, eggs, and dairy products were more likely to die early. Those who ate a plant-based diet (fruit, vegetables,

bread, cereals, pastas, beans, nuts, legumes) lived longer.

It's that simple. Eat less red meat. Skip the hamburger, T-bone steak, pot roast, or filet mignon. There are many healthier plant-based options that taste great. You'll be glad you did.

References

1. Wolk, A. (2017). Potential health hazards of eating red meat. *Journal of Internal Medicine*, 281(2):106-122. doi: 10.1111/joim.12543.
2. Larsson, S.C., Orsini, N. (2014). Red meat and processed meat consumption and all-cause mortality: a meta-analysis. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 179(3):282-289. doi: 10.1093/aje/kwt261.
3. Mingyang, S., et al. (2016). Association of animal and plant protein intake with all-cause and cause-specific mortality. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 176(10):1453-1463. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.4182.
4. Environmental Working Group. (2011). Meat eater's guide: Report on climate and environmental impacts. Accessed on June 8, <http://tinyurl.com/cerrtef>.
5. Renata, M., et al. (2010). Red and processed meat consumption and risk of incident coronary heart disease, stroke, and diabetes: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Circulation*, 121(21):2271-2283. doi: 10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.109.924977



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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you eat less red meat.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to help you form a habit of eating less red meat.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you ate less red meat. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of days this month I ate less red meat

_____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____