

GRILL WITH SKILL: REDUCE YOUR CANCER RISK

Use these handy barbeque tips to cook smart and live healthy! Expert advice from the Clinical Nutrition team of Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre's Patient and Family Support program:

1. Enjoy the Flavour. Reduce The Chemicals

Reduce your intake of cancer-causing compounds formed when meat is grilled:

- HCAs or heterocyclic amines within seared muscle of red meat, poultry, game and fish
- PAHs or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons from smoke/flare-ups when fat drips on coals.

Tips:

Marinate Your Meat

Studies show to marinate meat even for 10 minutes before grilling, can greatly reduce the formation of HCAs (*see below for **Marinade Mastery Tips**)

Reduce Grilling Time (... while reducing your standing time!)

Larger cuts of red meat (beef, pork, lamb), or bone-in chicken parts take longer to cook. Pre-cook these in the microwave, drain all juices then place on the barbeque. A two-minute pre-cook of meat substantially reduces HCA content.

If you're grilling burgers, the secret is in the flipping – flip earlier and flip often! Beef needs to be about 71 degrees celsius (160 degrees fahrenheit) inside. Chicken burgers need to be about 80 degrees celsius or 176 degrees fahrenheit inside. Keep a meat thermometer handy.

Shish Kebobs Rule!

Keep meat pieces small, to reduce grilling time and reduce the formation of HCAs and PAHs.

New Heights

Adjust the height of your grill if you can. Distance the grill from the flames to reduce PAHs or smoke absorption in your meat when fat drips on the coals, or when meat gets too charred or burned.

Got a charcoal grill? Wait until the coals glow and the flame is down, before grilling.
Got a gas grill? Turn the gas down to lower the temperature.

2. You Need More Than Meat!

Round out your barbequed meats with other foods and remember these proportions: count ½ plate of vegetables, ¼ meat, ¼ starches/grains.

Tips:

Go Fish!

Try fish and other seafood in foil, on cedar planks, or in a grilling basket.

Zucchini, You Say!?

Increase your vegetables and fruit. Try adding lightly grilled zucchini, peppers, mushrooms, green beans or any vegetable you like. Grilled pineapple and peaches are delicious.

Presentation!

Serve fresh fruits of the season alongside your grilled meat and vegetables.

Grill n' Toss

Add grilled foods to a colourful salad.

***Marinade Mastery Tips**

Marinate meat to minimize chemicals. Marinades are easy to make. You just need the following ingredients:

- acidic element – try lemon juice, wine, orange juice, or a vinegar of your choice
- herbs – try basil, tarragon, rosemary, dill, thyme, chives, cilantro, oregano
- seasonings – try soya sauce, garlic, ginger, Dijon mustard, maple syrup, honey, cayenne pepper

Note: To further reduce PAHs, experiment with leaving out oil or using less in your marinade.

Happy and Healthy Grilling!

The Clinical Nutrition team is part of the Odette Cancer Centre's Patient and Family Support Program. The Program works with Odette oncology teams to support patient and caregiver needs beyond treatment of the cancer. The Program also includes social workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech language pathologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, the Palliative Care Consult Team, and a drug reimbursement specialist.

Words To Live By: Follow these simple rules to help reduce your overall risk of cancer:

- Stay at a healthy weight at any age.
- Be physically active every day.
- Eat healthy:
Consume a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes such as beans. Limit red meats and avoid processed meats.
Avoid sugary drinks.
- Be a non-smoker and avoid tobacco smoke.
- Limit alcohol use.
- Reduce your exposure to ultraviolet rays from the sun, and tanning beds.
- Know your body. Report any changes to your doctor or dentist.
- Follow health and safety instructions when using hazardous materials.

Note: There are factors you cannot change that may increase cancer risk such as your age, and your family history or heredity of cancer.

Sources: Canadian Cancer Society, American Institute of Cancer Research.