



Now Serving:
Lean Pork!

David Newman, Ph.D., Swine /Meat Science Specialist
 Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist

Pork can serve as the basis of a wide variety of tasty meals for you and your family. Today's pork is very lean and healthful to eat. Pork provides a host of vitamins and minerals.

Did you know?

Today's pork has 16 percent less fat and 27 percent less saturated fat compared with pork in 1991. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has analyzed pork for trans-fatty acids (bad fats), and the results confirm that pork contains no artery-clogging trans fat, either.

On a 2,000-calorie diet, health experts recommend that total fat in the diet be less than 65 grams, with no more than 20 grams of saturated fat. Figure 1 shows the comparison of the fat content of different cuts of pork compared with chicken. Pork tenderloin, for example, has about the same amount of fat and saturated fat as skinless chicken breast. Pork chops have less total fat than skinless chicken thighs.

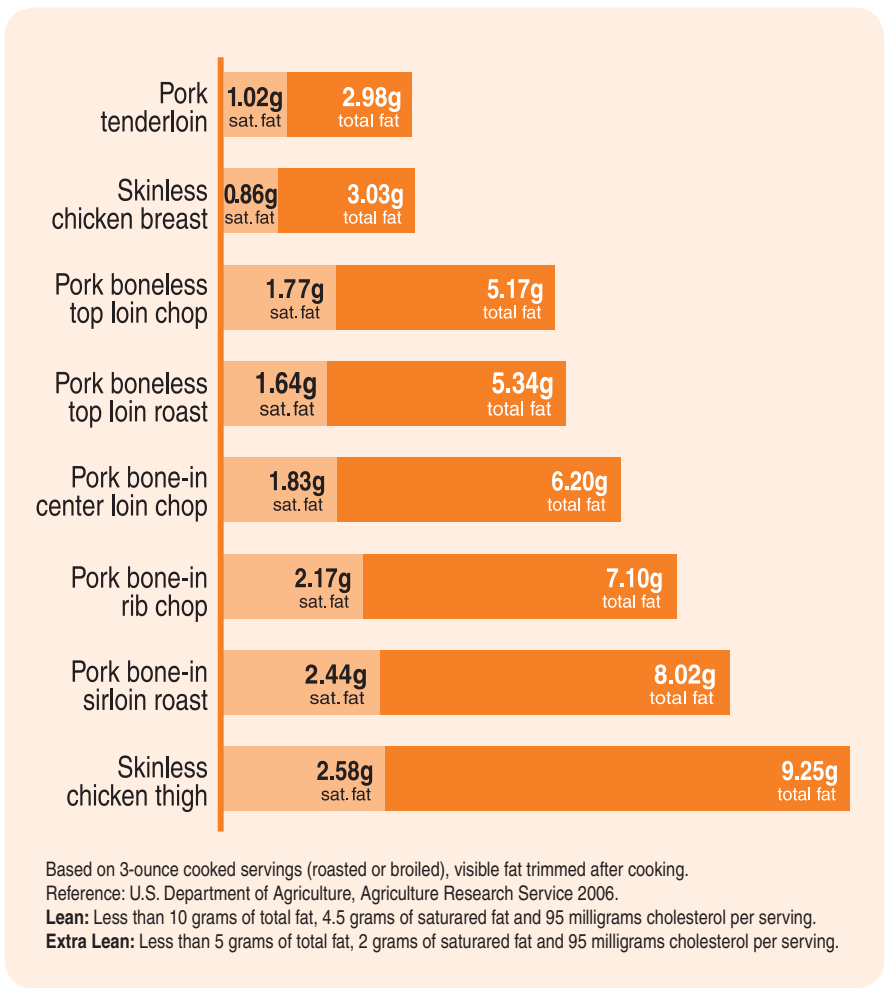


Figure 1. Fat and saturated fat comparison between pork and chicken.



Preparing healthful meals that feature pork starts at the supermarket and ends at the table.

When choosing and preparing pork, keep the following tips in mind:

Get a lean start

- Use cuts with the words “loin” in their name, such as pork tenderloin or loin chop, for the leanest meats.
- For the leanest pork, look for cuts with minimal visible fat.

Develop an eye for size

- Portion control is key to reaching and maintaining a healthful weight.
- Follow the MyPyramid guidelines and eat 5 to 7 ounces (for adults) from the meat group each day, depending on your calorie needs.
- A 3-ounce serving of trimmed, cooked meat is about the size of a deck of cards.

Skim and trim

- To cut total fat content per serving in half, remove excess fat prior to cooking.
- Skim fat from pan juices after pan-broiling.

Cook it light

- Use low-fat cooking methods, such as grilling, broiling, stir-frying and pan-broiling to maximize flavor while keeping added fat to a minimum.
- Broil, grill or roast on a rack so natural fat from meat drips away.
- Cook thin cuts of meat quickly, with little or no fat, by pan-broiling or “dry sautéing” in a nonstick skillet with a little juice or broth.
- Add stock, wine or fruit juice to the skillet after the meat is removed. Heat and stir, then use the stock, wine or juice as a low-fat sauce or glaze.
- Stir-fry with vegetable cooking spray or a small amount of flavored oil.
- Marinate for flavor and juiciness. Try juice, wine-flavored vinegar or fat-free dressing instead of oil-based marinades.



Add some spice

- Season meats with herbs and spices (other than salt) to boost flavor and cut back on fat and salt at the same time. Rub herbs and spices onto the pork before grilling, broiling or roasting.
- Experiment with different seasonings to discover exciting new ways to enjoy healthful eating.

S-T-R-E-T-C-H flavorful, higher-fat ingredients

- Use favorite foods such as sharp cheeses and herb-flavored oils to flavor your dishes, but cut the amount in half.
- Use low-fat cheeses or whipped or reduced-fat butter.

Lighten up on the ladle

- To get the most benefit from the vegetables you're eating, use less of a regular salad dressing, or use a fat-free variety or herb-flavored vinegar instead.
- Choose cream-based sauces and gravies less often than sauces made with skim milk or fat-free broth.

Keep Meat Safe at Home

- Thaw meat in the microwave or refrigerator, not in the sink or on the counter. Microwave-thawed meat should be cooked immediately.
- Store raw meat in the coldest part of the refrigerator or meat drawer. Keep it below ready-to-eat foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm running water before and after handling food.
- Keep cutting boards used for cutting raw meat separate from ready-to-eat foods.

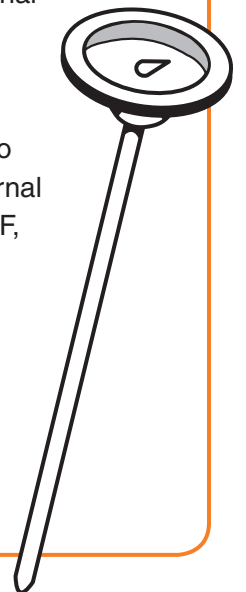


Meat Thermometer How-to:

Pork often can be overcooked, so checking the internal temperature often will help prevent dry pork. Pork is safe to eat slightly pink, just like roast beef.

FDA regulations (used in restaurants) require fresh pork to be cooked to an internal temperature of 145 F for four minutes. Therefore, pork chops should be removed from the grill at an internal temperature of 140 to 145 F. This will result in a final internal temperature of approximately 150 F, assuming a 5-degree temperature rise after the meat has been taken off the grill.

USDA recommends that pork be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 F.



Recipes

courtesy of the National Pork Board
Additional recipes are available
at www.theotherwhitemeat.com.

Key to abbreviations:

c. = cup
Tbsp. = tablespoon
tsp. = teaspoon
oz. = ounce

lb. = pound
pkg. = package
g = gram
mg = milligram

Honey Pork Tenderloin Kabobs

Time: 15 minutes prep/15 minutes cook

2 Tbsp. cider vinegar

½ c. honey

½ c. mustard

1 tsp. dried tarragon

3 to 4 sweet potatoes, cut into 24 1-inch cubes

1½ lb. pork tenderloin, cut into 24 1-inch cubes

4 medium ripe peaches, unpeeled, pitted
and quartered

4 green peppers, each cut into 8 2-inch pieces

8 yellow onions, each cut into 4 2-inch pieces
olive oil, for grilling

Soak wood kabob skewers in water prior to
adding meat and veggies to prevent burning
the sticks on the grill. Mix first four ingredients
in a bowl; stir well and set glaze aside. Steam
or boil sweet potatoes until crisp-tender.

Thread three sweet potato cubes, three pork
cubes, two peach quarters, four green pepper
pieces and four onion pieces alternately onto
each of eight 10-inch skewers. Brush kabobs
with honey glaze mixture. Lightly oil grill.

Grill over medium-hot coals five minutes on
each side or until thoroughly heated, basting
occasionally with glaze.

*Makes six servings. Each serving has 400
calories, 62 g carbohydrate, 3 g fat, 7 g fiber and
460 mg sodium.*

America's Favorite Pork Chops

Time: 20 minutes prep/15 minutes cook

4 pork chops, ¾-inch thick

¾ c. Italian dressing*

1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

Place all ingredients in a self-sealing bag;
seal bag and place in refrigerator for at
least 20 minutes (or as long as overnight).

Remove chops from bag, discarding
marinade, and grill over a medium-hot fire,
turning once, until just done, about eight to
11 minutes total cooking time, until internal
temperature on a thermometer reads 160 F.

* Option: To reduce calories and fat, use a
reduced-fat Italian dressing.

*Makes four servings. Each serving has
210 calories, 5 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat and
910 mg sodium.*

For more information, visit:

**NDSU Extension Service
Nutrition, Food Safety and Health**

www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

National Pork Board

www.theotherwhitemeat.com



MyPyramid.gov
STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

The NDSU Extension Service does not endorse commercial products or companies even though reference may be made to tradenames, trademarks or service names.

This publication may be copied for noncommercial, educational purposes in its entirety with no changes. Requests to use any portion of the document (including text, graphics or photos) should be sent to NDSU.permission@ndsu.edu. Include exactly what is requested for use and how it will be used.

For more information on this and other topics, see www.ag.ndsu.edu

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. North Dakota State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, age, status as a U.S. veteran, sexual orientation, marital status, or public assistance status. Direct inquiries to the Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Global Outreach, 205 Old Main, (701) 231-7708. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, (701) 231-7881.

2M-4-10