



Grill master

Charring, burning, or grilling meat, poultry, and fish over high temperatures causes heterocyclic amines (HCAs) to form. These HCAs can damage your genes and raise your risk for stomach and colorectal cancers, says The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. You can avoid HCAs:

- Use a marinade. Marinating meat in vinegar, lemon juice, and herbs such as mint, rosemary, tarragon, or sage can reduce HCA formation by as much as 96%. Just 30 minutes can help.
- Stick with fish. Fish contains less fat and cooks faster than meat and poultry.
- Lightly oil the grill. This keeps charred materials from sticking to your food.
- Pre-cook food. Cook meat, poultry, or fish in the microwave or oven for 2 to 5 minutes, then finish them on the grill.
- Lower the temperature. For a charcoal grill, spread the coals thinly or prop the grill rack on bricks. This reduces the heat by increasing the distance between your food and the coals. And use barbecue briquettes and hardwood products, such as hickory and maple. They burn at lower temperatures than softwood (pine) chips.
- Scrub the grill. Cleaning the grill after each use prevents harmful chemicals from building up and transferring to your food.