

Fill your grill, *but keep it healthy*



Many people like to use their grill or barbecue during the summer months. While grilling can create delicious meals, it's important to know how to avoid grilling meats the wrong way, which can increase cancer-causing substances in the food.

Substances known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and heterocyclic amines (HCAs) can be found in meat that is cooked at high temperatures. These substances have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals. But the levels used in the animal studies were very high. Experts cannot say for sure how much of these substances would cause cancer in people.

PAHs and HCAs can be found in meat that has been grilled, especially if it's charred or blackened. Meat that is smoked may also contain these chemicals.

To lower these substances in grilled food, you can:

- Avoid burning or charring the food when grilling.
- Turn meat frequently when grilling to avoid burnt or very hot areas.
- Don't let the flames touch the meat directly.
- Marinate the meat first.
- Wrap meat in foil before placing it on the grill.
- Trim excess fat off of meat to avoid charring.
- Cut it up. Smaller pieces of meat will cook faster throughout. Try skewers or small pieces mixed in foil packets with vegetables.

BEYOND MEAT

Vegetables and fruits can be delicious on the grill and they don't have the risk of PAHs or HCAs. This doesn't mean that meat-lovers have to avoid their favorite foods. Instead, have a portion of meat about the size of a deck of cards. Then fill the rest of your plate with vegetables. Red peppers, tomatoes, pineapple, peaches and asparagus are just a few of the vegetarian options that are both delicious and nutritious on the grill.



Sources: American Institute for Cancer Research, National Cancer Institute