

Red Meat Intake: A Canadian Perspective

Canadian consumption of red meat is summarized in this brief document to provide current information on intake. The data presented has been obtained from Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey 2.2. This review highlights key observations on total red meat intake, provincial intakes and red meat as part of a balanced diet.

National Red Meat Intake

Table 1: Canadian Red Meat Intake

Meat Category	Mean intake for all Canadians (grams/day)	Number of Food Guide Servings
Fresh red meat (beef, veal, pork and lamb including ground meat)	52	< 1
Processed red meat	22	< 1/3
Total red meat (above two categories)	74	1

* All Canadians include both males and females ≥ 1 year of age

Key Observations on Canadian Red Meat Intake

- *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* recommends that children consume 1-2 servings of Meat and Alternatives and teens and adults consume 2-3 servings a day. One Food Guide Serving is equivalent to 75 grams of cooked lean meat, fish or poultry.
- Canadians' red meat consumption is within Food Guide recommendations.
- Total average red meat consumption is equivalent to one Food Guide Serving (see Table 1).
- Average consumption of *fresh* red meat including ground meat (which includes burgers at foodservice establishments) is less than one Food Guide Serving (see Table 1).
- Average consumption of *processed* red meat is less than one third of a Food Guide Serving (see Table 1).

Table 2: Canadian Adult Red Meat Intake

Meat Category	Mean intake for Female Adults (grams/day)	Number of Food Guide Servings	Mean intake for Male Adults (grams/day)	Number of Food Guide Servings
Fresh red meat (beef, veal, pork and lamb) including ground meat	40	< 1	73	< 1
Processed red meat	15	< 1/4	28	< 1/2
Total red meat (above two categories)	55	< 1	101	1 1/3

* Males and females ≥ 19 years of age

Key Observations on Adult Canadians' Red Meat Intake

- *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* recommends adult females consume 2 servings, or 150 grams, of Meat and Alternatives a day and males 3 servings or 225 grams.
- Adult Canadians' red meat consumption is within Food Guide recommendations.
- Total average red meat consumption for males is 1 1/3 Food Guide Servings which is within Food Guide recommendations (see Table 2).
- Total average red meat consumption for females is less than one Food Guide Serving (see Table 2).
- Average consumption of *fresh* red meat including ground meat (which includes burgers at foodservice establishments) is less than one Food Guide Serving for both males and females.
- Average consumption of *processed* red meat for males is less than half of a Food Guide Serving and for females is less than a quarter.

Provincial Red Meat Intake

Table 3 lists the most recent data of fresh red meat intake (beef, veal, pork and lamb including ground meat) in adult men and women by province.

Table 3: Adult Fresh Red Meat Intake by Province

Province	Adult Females Mean Red Meat Intake (grams/day)	Adult Males Mean Red Meat Intake (grams/day)
Newfoundland & Labrador	42.3	53.7
Prince Edward Island	41.0	61.4
Nova Scotia	45.3	74.8
New Brunswick	37.0	70.2
Quebec	43.1	72.1
Ontario	35.3	71.4
Manitoba	38.8	74.3
Saskatchewan	50.5	76.5
Alberta	46.6	83.8
British Columbia	39.7	70.3

* Males and females ≥ 19 years of age

Key Observations on Red Meat Intake by Province

- Among males, only two provinces – Alberta and Saskatchewan – have average intakes equal to or above one Food Guide Serving.
- Among females, all of the provincial averages are less than one Food Guide Serving.

Red meat plays an important role in a healthy diet

- Red meat is an excellent source of protein, vitamin B₁₂, zinc and selenium.
- Red meat is a source of iron, thiamin, riboflavin, vitamin B₆, phosphorus, pantothenic acid, magnesium and copper.
- Iron and zinc from red meat is much more bioavailable than similar levels found in plant based products.
- When trimmed of visible fat, all cuts of beef and pork, except short ribs and spare ribs, have less than 10% fat, and qualify as lean.
- Several cuts of beef and pork meet the criteria of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada's Health Check™ program.
- Red meat is a great choice for healthy living, naturally contains 14 essential nutrients and is part of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*.

Overall Observations

1. Average intake of fresh red meat is less than one Food Guide Serving per day.
2. Average intake of processed red meat is less than half of a Food Guide Serving per day.
3. Average daily intake of total red meat (fresh and processed) is equivalent to one Food Guide Serving.
4. Canadians' daily intake of total red meat is within the Food Guide recommendations.
5. On average, adult males consume red meat within Canada's Food Guide recommendations while adult females consume less than one Food Guide Serving of red meat a day.
6. Red meat is an important source of many essential nutrients and is part of a well balanced diet.
7. Following *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* will help people satisfy their nutrient needs, reduce the risk of chronic diseases and achieve overall health.