Pork

Did you know...

- Pork is the most commonly consumed meat in the world.

- Bacon is not counted as a protein. A majority of the calories in bacon come from fat, not protein.

- Pork, consumed in moderation, can be part of a healthy diet.

Pork, while sometimes referred to as a white meat, is considered a red meat.

Health Benefits of Pork

- Pork is an excellent source of nutrients including protein, thiamin, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, niacin, and zinc.
- A 3-ounce serving of cooked lean pork provides around 22 grams of protein.
- Pork also provides iron, magnesium, potassium, and phosphorous.
- Consuming pork in an unprocessed form (no additives) is best for health.

Lean Cuts of Pork

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines "lean" as 100 grams (approx. 3.5 ounces) of pork with less than 10 grams of fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol.

It defines "extra lean" as 100 grams of pork with less than 5 grams of fat, less than 2 grams of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol.

Lean and extra lean cuts of pork include:
- Pork tenderloin (the leanest and most tender cut)
- Pork chops
- Sirloin pork roast
- Ground pork, 96% lean

Healthy Cooking with Pork

Pork can be incorporated into a variety of recipes and cooked in different ways to optimize flavor.

- For safety, the USDA recommends cooking ground pork to 160 °F and cooking pork steaks, chops, and roasts to 145 °F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Avoid overcooking your pork or it becomes tough and chewy.
- Allowing meat like pork to rest for a few minutes after cooking will help prevent the juices from leaking out when cutting, keeping the meat moist.
- Soaking pork steaks or chops in a marinade before cooking can help tenderize and flavor the meat.
- Make a marinade by combining fat (such as olive oil or vegetable oil), acid (such as vinegar or lemon juice), and flavor (such as herbs, spices, and/or aromatics like garlic, chilies, or ginger).

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