Tips for Healthy Grilling

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What makes grilling unhealthy?

1. What we choose to grill...
Versus...
What makes grilling unhealthy?

2. What we choose to serve with our grilled foods...
Versus...
Versus...
What makes grilling unhealthy?

3. Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) & Heterocyclic Amines (HCAs)
What are PAHs and HCAs?

• Cancer Causing Compounds
• PAHs
  • PAHs form when fat from the meat drips onto the hot coals or grill element. They're then deposited on the food courtesy of flame-ups and rising smoke.
  • Unfortunately, that yummy charring that forms on meat can contain PAHs as well.
• HCAs
  • HCAs are produced when red meat, poultry and fish meet high-heat cooking, like grilling or broiling.
So how can we minimize PAHs and HCAs?

• Choose lower fat cuts of meat so less fat drips onto the coals/gas so that flare-ups are reduced.
• Grill fruits and vegetables – PAHs and HCAs don’t form on fruits or veggies.
Look for marinades that use olive or canola oil and as little oil as possible. Refrigerate any foods that are marinating longer than 1/2 hour. Don't baste your food during grilling with the liquid the meat was marinating in (this passes raw meat juices to your cooked meat). Before you add the meat, set aside some of your marinade for this purpose. Meats and poultry should marinate at least 1-2 hours; fish and vegetables generally only need to marinate for an hour.

- The simple act of marinating before grilling has been shown to reduce the formation of HCAs by as much as 92% to 99% in some studies.
• Cut down on grilling time.
  • Grill smaller portions of meat, poultry, and fish so they cook faster and spend less time on the grill.
  • Skewer it or use a grill pan.
• Flipping food frequently may help prevent the formation of HCAs, according to recent research using hamburger patties.
  • To turn meat without piercing it (which releases juices that drip onto the coals), use tongs or spatulas instead of a fork.
  • Use foil packets.
What’s the Bottom Line?

- Everything in moderation.
- Health is more than physical health and nutrition.