

Where's the Beef, or chicken or fish? On the grill!

Cook on the grill! It's quick and easy, a great way to cut down on fat and add flavor. Try these ideas:

Choose fish, shellfish and poultry eaten without the skin for the lowest-fat entrees.

Serving beef? Choose Select grade beef from the loin or round to keep the fat level as low as possible. The USDA sets the grade, based on the amount of marbling (flecks of fat in the meat). More marbling means more fat. **Select** beef has the least fat of commonly sold meat, followed by Choice beef. Prime beef is highest in fat. A 3-ounce portion of beef ranges from about 7 g fat for a cut from the round, select grade, to 15 g fat for filet mignon, choice grade.

Pork and lamb have fat content in similar ranges to beef.

Marinades tenderize tough meat and add flavor. Acid, like vinegar, wine, fruit juice, buttermilk or yogurt, also reduces the amount of carcinogens that form when meat, poultry and fish are cooked dry at high heat. Marinades work slowly and may not penetrate much beyond the surface of thick pieces of meat; thin slices marinate better. Marinate foods covered and in the refrigerator. Leftover marinade can be used for basting meat while cooking. Discard leftover marinade after basting.

Kebabs are a great way to cut down on portion size.

Trim all fat you can see before grilling.

Spit roasting is an excellent way to cook large pieces of meat evenly, and tends to retain juices.

Firm **fish** can be cooked directly on a grill; other fish is easier to handle in a closed wire basket or cooked without turning on a wood plank.

Grilled foods can brown very quickly and may look done, yet may not be cooked in the middle. Use a **meat thermometer** to make sure food is fully cooked.

Cook fish, beef, veal and roasts to 145°F; lean ground beef and pork to 160°F; poultry breasts, pieces and whole poultry (check temperature in the thigh), ground turkey or chicken to 165°F.

To **cook food thoroughly without overcooking on the outside**, brown it quickly on both sides in 2-3 minutes. Then turn down the flame or move it to an area with fewer coals, for several minutes of cooking at a lower heat. Or, flip food frequently, about once a minute. This prevents meat from both absorbing and releasing too much heat, and it actually cooks faster and is more moist with a better texture.

References: USDA nutrient data base, www.ams.usda.gov/howtobuy/meat.htm; *On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen* by Harold McGee (New York: Scribners, 2004)

Recipe of the Week: Fish and veggie kebabs

Serves 4-6, adapted from Jane Brody's Good Food Gourmet

Marinade:

- ½ cup dry white wine
- 3 Tablespoons reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon canola or olive oil
- 1 large clove of garlic, chopped fine

Kebabs:

- 1 lb. firm fish (like tuna, cod, halibut, swordfish, catfish, haddock or monkfish) cut in 1" cubes
- 1 medium onion, peeled, cut in quarters and layers separated
- 1 sweet green pepper, cut in 1 ½" pieces
- 1 sweet red pepper, cut in 1 ½" pieces
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced ¼" thick

1. In a medium bowl, combine marinade ingredients. Add fish, toss to coat well.
2. Cover bowl and refrigerate at least 2 hours.
3. Put fish and vegetables onto 6 long skewers. Save marinade for basting during cooking.
4. Cook on grill or in broiler. Turn several times, basting with marinade. Cook till fish is done, 10-15 minutes. Veggies will be crunchy. Discard leftover marinade.

Nutrition information per kebab:

Calories: 115 Total fat: 4g Saturated fat: 1g
Fiber: 1.5g Protein: 13g Carbohydrate: 5.5g

Tip of the Week: Do you have seasonal allergies? At this time of year, exercise indoors and avoid spending too much time outside, especially on high pollen count days. If you do go out for a walk, run or bike ride, wash your face or take a shower after a prolonged amount of time outdoors or at bedtime to help wash away any pollen caught in hair and your eyelashes.
--- adapted from www.boston.com