



Meat And Poultry In A Balanced Diet

(NAPSA)—If you're like a lot of people, you may be uncertain about how to eat right and get and stay fit, so a few facts from the expert research may be good news.

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, they say, isn't about short-term dietary changes. It's about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating and regular physical activity.

In addition, many nutrition experts agree that meat and poultry should be part of a balanced diet and can help satisfy hunger and control weight while delivering key nutrients people need.

Twelve Reasons To Eat Meat And Poultry

1. Protein. Naturally and completely. Protein found in meat and poultry is "complete" because it contains all the amino acids essential for health. Animal proteins are complete proteins, points out the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

2. Iron rich. Meat, fish and poultry contain heme iron, which helps prevent anemia because the body absorbs this iron better than the nonheme iron found in plant foods such as vegetables. Heme iron foods, reports the National Institutes of Health, also help the body absorb nonheme iron found in plant foods.

3. Bioavailable nutrition. Nutrients in meat, including iron and zinc, are typically more easily absorbed and used by the body.

4. Muscle strength and maintenance. High-quality protein, in meat and poultry, has been shown to prevent muscle loss more effectively than other protein foods as people age.

5. Bone strength. No bones about it. According to a University of Massachusetts study, meatless diets contain lower amounts of calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B₁₂, protein, and omega-3 fatty acids, all of which play important roles in maintaining bone health.

6. Brain function. Animal products such as meat are the only natural sources of vitamin B₁₂. This nutrient promotes brain development in children, according to a Food and Nutrition Bulletin, and, adds the Institute of



Meat and poultry may make for tasty meals but there are a lot more reasons they should be part of your balanced diet.

Medicine's Food and Nutrition Board, helps the nervous system function properly.

7. Heart health. Australian research published in *The American Society for Clinical Nutrition* shows that lean meat protein could help maintain healthy cardiovascular function.

8. Blood sugar control. An article in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* suggests a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet, which could include lean meat and poultry, can help to control blood sugars.

9. Zinc immunity. Researchers also found that zinc helps maintain optimal immune function and promotes wound healing. Beef is the top dietary source of zinc.

10. Selenium rich. A serving of beef or lamb delivers about half your daily selenium needs. Selenium is an antioxidant that helps prevent cell damage, promotes proper thyroid function and may contribute to cancer prevention, reports the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*.

11. Weight management. Studies in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* say high-protein diets that include lean meat and poultry have been shown to promote long-term weight loss better than other diets.

12. Tastes good. No scientific papers proving this are available. You'll have to do the research yourself.

Learn More

For more facts, tips and recipes, visit the North American Meat Institute at www.meatpoultrynutrition.org.