

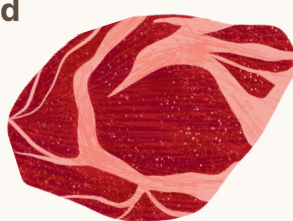
Meet Meat

What is meat? How much should we eat?
 What are the benefits for our health?
 These and other questions answered in this factsheet.

What is meat?

Meat is the term for the edible portions of any animal used for food. It is a **nutrient dense food** composed mainly by **protein, fat, vitamin B12, B6, B3, B2, zinc, iron, potassium and phosphorus**¹.

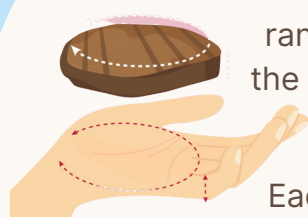
Meat can be divided in unprocessed meat (e.g. beef) and processed meat (e.g. sausage) depending on the type of processing.



How much should we eat?

Member-States' recommendations have a large range, going up to 600g of **red meat** per week, with the majority of the recommendations laying between **350g-500g/week**²

Each Member-State has its own particularities, with some recommending specific cuts and portions. The **average portion is the "1 hand palm-sized finger-thick piece of meat"** as shown in the image aside.



What are the benefits?

Red meat consumption has a positive impact throughout the whole life cycle.

Starting with **newborns**, meat is a great source of essential nutrients that contribute for the **adequate development and growth** of newborns³.

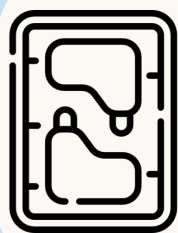
Due to its high bioavailability of nutrients, it also **prevents deficiencies** such as anemia in **children and adults**⁴.

For the **elderly** it **prevents muscle loss and improves healthier ageing** due to the high quantity and bioavailability of protein⁵.

Best way to cook meat

Cooking meat improves the quality of the food by adding new flavour, taste, colour, and texture. The process of **cooking** at high temperature also **inactivates pathogens on the food**, which contributes for a higher food security of the individual⁶.

The best way to cook meat is to **steam it at 70°C and add the least amount of fat and salt possible**. We advice the use of olive oil and spices for a more adequate nutrition, within a varied and balanced diet.



Health and Nutrition Claims

Meat is a nutrient dense food and so, according to the European Regulations **1924/2006** and **432/2012**, there are many health and nutrition claims possible to be made, such as^{7,8}:

Nutrition claims: High Protein,
 Source of/High in vitamin B12, B6, Iron, Zinc & others.

Health Claims: Health claims linked to Meat, Protein, Vitamins B12, B6, B3, B2, Zinc, Iron, Potassium and Phosphorus.

1 Food composition data | EFSA (europa.eu)

2 https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/health_promotion-knowledge-gateway/food-based-dietary-guidelines-europe-table-8_en

3 <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/nu1122891>

4 <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2022.766796>

5 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clnu.2014.04.007>

6 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.fct.2014.01.045>

7 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02006R1924-20141213>

8 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02012R0432-20210517>