

Ten Healthy Ideas for a Lean Barbeque Season

Before you dust off that grill, we have some tips to help you enjoy the BBQ season while keeping your dinners as lean and healthy as can be. These grilling tips can help you have a healthier cookout.

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Bold ingredients add great flavor to grilling sauces and marinades.

You can add bold flavors without adding too many calories or fat grams. Some favorite ingredients for sauces and marinades are Worcestershire sauce, chili sauce, tomato paste, molasses, and soy sauce.

Have large sealable bag, will marinate!

One of the easiest ways to marinate meat, chicken, fish or vegetables is to place them inside a large, resealable plastic bag. Set the bag in a medium sized bowl, then drizzle the marinade over the food. Seal the bag, eliminating any excess air. The food should be surrounded by the marinade. Keep marinating in the refrigerator until you're ready to grill.



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A little sweetness is good, but more is NOT better.

Adding a small amount of a sweet ingredient (like fruit juice, brown sugar, honey or molasses) to the marinade or grilling sauce can be a good thing, but too much sweetness can encourage the meat, fish, or vegetables to burn when they're grilled over high heat.

Throw some vegetables on the grill.

The best part about grilling vegetables is that you don't have to worry about overcooking them as you do with some types of meat. When you cook them over direct medium heat, turning frequently, they'll usually be done in 8-10 minutes. These vegetables work especially well on the grill: onions, corn on the cob, whole mushrooms, eggplant, zucchini and asparagus spears.



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When grilling chicken take the skin off – take it ALL off!

Half the fat in chicken breasts and thighs is in the skin. Take the skin off before you prepare the chicken for grilling. Marinate skinless chicken breasts and thighs for about 2 hours in the refrigerator. Let the marinade drain off, then cook chicken over direct high heat or direct medium heat until it's done throughout. Always check the thickest part of the chicken breast or thigh for doneness.

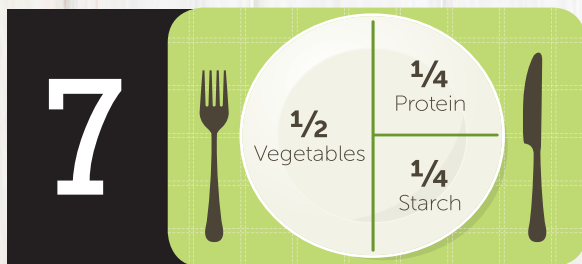


Use the leanest cuts of beef and pork.

A 4-ounce serving of a higher fat steak broiled with 1/8-inch trim of fat, contains 337 calories, and 10 grams of saturated fat. A leaner steak trimmed of visible fat contains 240 calories and 4 grams of saturated fat per 4-ounce serving. A 4-ounce serving of a higher-fat pork cut contains 274 calories, and 6 grams saturated fat. A leaner pork cut contains 162 calories and 1.4 grams saturated fat per 4-ounce serving.



6



Be sensible about serving size.

Encourage eating smaller portions by grilling the meat in smaller portions, such as 1/4 pound burgers, filet mignon-sized steaks, kabobs made with small pieces of meat and vegetables, link sausages cut lengthwise in half or thin slices of larger cuts of meat.

Tenderize lean meats with marinades!

When grilling lean meat, use lower-fat marinades with acid ingredients to help break down the tough fibers. Marinades add lots of flavor, too. But keep in mind that marinades tenderize the surface of the meat only to about 1/4 inch. That's why it's important to make sure the marinade covers the entire surface of your meat. It also helps to score the meat before coating it with marinade.



8



Lower potential cancer risks associated with grilling.

PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) and HCAs (heterocyclic amines) are substances formed on the surface of well-done meat cooked at high temperatures. A few grilling suggestions to reduce your cancer risk: Use a low-fat marinade, select leaner cuts (and trim any visible fat), flip the meat on the grill often, and reduce flare-ups by spreading aluminum foil on the grill.

Just say "no" to processed meat.

The AICR recommends limiting your consumption of cooked red meat to no more than 18 ounces per week. Things get more dismal for processed meats. The AICR did an analysis and found that every 3.5 ounces of processed meat eaten per day increased the risk for colorectal cancer by 42%. Processed meats include hot dogs, sausages, bacon, ham, and cold cuts.



10

Source: WebMD.com