

Choosing and Cooking Lean Meats

Choosing lean meats can aid in weight loss and help to meet your protein needs. But choosing lean meats doesn't mean that they have to be tough. In fact, lean meat can be tender, tasty, and low in calories. To do this, use **cooking methods that retain moisture**, and use **low-calorie sauces and marinades that add moisture and flavor**.

How to choose your meats:



1. Choose 'select' cuts of meat to limit marbling

Marbling increases the fat and calories in your diet. Prime cuts have the most marbling, **select cuts have the least**, and choice cuts fall between the two.

2. Choose meats with 'loin' or 'round' in the name

Choose meats such as sirloin, tenderloin, and eye of round. These cuts are generally the leanest.

3. Choose low-fat ground turkey breast or chicken breast meat.

Ground poultry can have as much fat as ground beef has, or more, because it often includes dark meat and skin. To make the leanest choice, choose **ground breast meat**.

How to cook your meats:

Moist cooking methods trap in water as they cook rather than drying out the meat and making it tough. They include braising, stewing, boiling, and cooking meat wrapped in foil or parchment paper. You can also microwave, sauté, and stir fry using a lid to trap in the moisture.

Dry methods of cooking including baking, broiling, roasting, and grilling can toughen up a lean cut of meat by drying it out. You can avoid this by using a sauce that adds flavor and moisture, but doesn't deliver extra fat or calories.

To keep meat tender when cooking with dry methods:

- Slather the meat in a specialty mustard or other low calorie sauce
- Marinate or cook in salsa
- Marinate or cover with non-fat yogurt mixed with spices and herbs
- Place slices of citrus fruits on top during cooking



By definition, lean cuts of meat are **lower in fat, saturated fat and calories**. Fresh grilled salmon with garlic and rosemary sounds delicious, and it is! But you don't need to replace all the meat in your diet with fish and poultry. As long as you make sure that the red or white meats you choose are lean, there won't be much difference in fat and calories.

You can enjoy meat along with other sources of protein. Just make sure it's lean, and it will help you achieve the lean body you desire.

Look for these Lean and Extra Lean Cuts Meat

Government Guidelines:

Lean – Less than 10 grams of total fat, less than 4.5 grams of saturated fat, and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 3-ounce serving

Extra Lean- Less than 5 grams of total fat, less than 2 grams of saturated fat and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3-ounce serving

Beef Cuts 3 ounce portion (visible fat trimmed)	Calories	Saturated Fat (grams)	Total Fat (grams)
Eye Round Roast	144	1.4	4.0
Sirloin Tip Side Steak	143	1.6	4.1
Top Round Roast	157	1.6	4.6
Bottom Round Roast	139	1.7	4.9
Top Sirloin Steak	156	1.9	4.9
95% Lean Ground Beef	139	2.4	5.1

Pork Cuts 3 ounce portion (visible fat trimmed)	Calories	Saturated Fat (grams)	Total Fat (grams)
Tenderloin	120	1.0	3.0
Boneless Top Loin Chops	173	1.8	5.2
Boneless Top Loin Roast	147	1.6	5.3
Center Loin Chops	153	1.8	6.2

Poultry Cuts 3 ounce portion (visible fat trimmed)	Calories	Saturated Fat (grams)	Total Fat (grams)
Skinless Chicken Breast	140	0.9	3.1
Ground Turkey Breast	110	0.5	1.0

