

# Nutrition News And Notes



## Take This Quiz To Check Your Meat Nutrition IQ

(NAPS)—Many are surprised when they learn that they underestimate the nutritional value of meat and poultry in a balanced diet.

Recent polling shows many consumers aren't aware of the important nutritional benefits that meat and poultry can offer when included in a balanced diet. That's the word from the experts at the American Meat Institute Foundation.

Here is a short quiz that can give you an idea how your meat nutrition IQ stacks up.

**Question 1:** *Which food group is the only group consumed in the proper amount among Americans?*

Only one in three consumers recognized that the protein category is the only food category consumed at the proper levels, according to federal data. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend two to three three-ounce servings of protein. A three-ounce serving of meat is approximately the size of a deck of cards. American men eat 6.9 ounces of meat, poultry and seafood per day and women, on average, eat 4.4 ounces.

By contrast, fruits, vegetables and whole grains are underconsumed, while discretionary sugars and fats are overconsumed by Americans. This means that when it comes to meat and poultry, most consumers should continue consuming the amount of meat and poultry they currently enjoy but pair meat and poultry with more vegetables and enjoy fruit for desserts, sides or snacks. Add a whole grain bun to a burger and sip on an unsweetened beverage.

**Question 2:** *From which food does the body absorb the most iron?*

While the No. 1 answer for many consumers was spinach, kale and leafy greens, the correct answer is meat, poultry and fish. While greens such as spinach are high in iron, greens contain a type called "non-heme iron" that is not absorbed by the body as readily as heme iron, which is found in meat, poultry and fish.

Consumers may also not realize that when meat and vegetables are consumed together, the



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heme iron in meat actually helps the body absorb the non-heme in vegetables more readily.

Iron deficiency is a serious matter. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, iron deficiency anemia is the most common nutritional deficiency worldwide. It can reduce the ability of adults to work at capacity, increase fatigue, and impact motor and mental development in children and adolescents. It affects 2 percent of all females 12 to 69.

**Question 3:** *What is the only natural source of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, which keeps the body's nervous system healthy?*

If you said cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower, you are in good—but mistaken—company with 20 percent of consumers.

Only 12 percent correctly answered "animal products." Animal products are, in fact, the only natural source of the important nutrient B<sub>12</sub>. Nutritionists recommend that adult men and women consume 2.4 micrograms of B<sub>12</sub> per day. While some foods, such as cereals, are fortified with B<sub>12</sub>, animal products are rich in B<sub>12</sub> naturally.

For a complete, dietitian-authored brochure about the role that meat and poultry can play in your balanced diet, send a self-addressed, 4.5" x 6" envelope with 69 cents postage to American Meat Institute/Nutrition Brochure, 1150 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20036. You may also download the brochure on the home page of [www.meatami.com](http://www.meatami.com).