

# PORK & YOUR HEALTH

## What Pork Is

Pork is the meat of domesticated pigs and is one of the most widely consumed proteins globally. It provides **high-quality protein**, essential vitamins, and minerals, but its health impact varies significantly by cut and cooking method.

## Key Health Benefits of Pork

**High-quality protein** — Supports muscle repair, immune function, and hormone production.

**Rich in B-vitamins** — Especially B1 (thiamine), B6, and B12, which support energy metabolism and brain health.

**Iron and zinc** — Important for oxygen transport, immunity, and wound healing.

**Creatine and taurine** — Naturally occurring compounds that support muscle and heart function.

## Healthiest Pork Choices

**Pork tenderloin** — Leanest cut; similar to skinless chicken breast.

**Pork loin roast** — Low in fat and versatile.

**Center-cut chops** — Leaner than shoulder or rib chops.

**93% lean ground pork** — Better for heart-healthy diets

## Portion & Frequency Guidelines

**Serving size:** 3–4 oz cooked (about the size of a deck of cards).

**Frequency:** 1–2 times per week for most adults, focusing on lean cuts.

**Processed pork:** Limit or avoid due to strong evidence linking it to chronic disease.

## Health Risks to Consider

**High saturated fat** — Fatty cuts can raise LDL cholesterol and increase cardiovascular risk.

**Processed pork** — Bacon, ham, sausage, and hot dogs are linked to higher risks of heart disease and colorectal cancer.

**High sodium** — Many pork products are cured or salted, contributing to hypertension.

**Foodborne illness** — Undercooked pork can carry parasites or bacteria.

## Healthiest Ways to Prepare Pork

**Grilling** — Reduces fat by allowing it to drip away.

**Baking or roasting** — Preserves nutrients without added oils.

**Stir-frying** — Works well with lean cuts and vegetables.

**Slow-cooking** — Tenderizes lean cuts without added fat.

Avoid: deep-frying, heavy breading, sugary glazes, and high-sodium marinades.

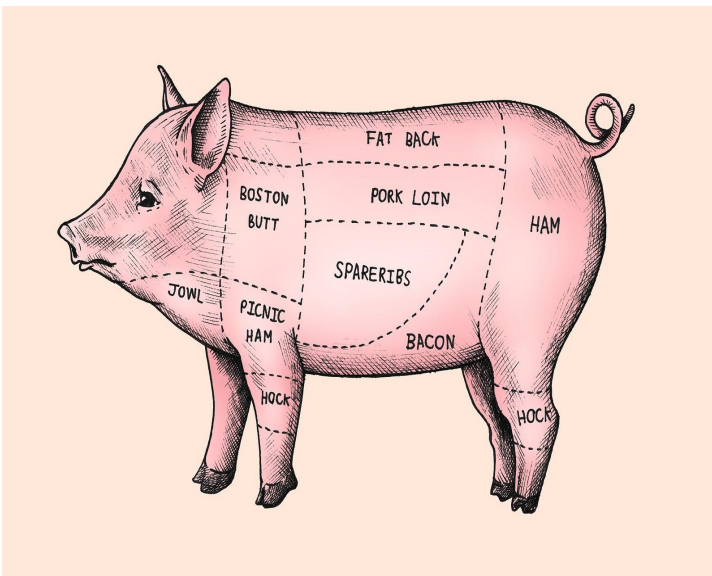
## Who Should Be More Cautious

People with **high cholesterol** or **heart disease**

Individuals with **hypertension** (due to sodium)

Those managing **weight**

Pregnant individuals (food safety is critical)



## Quick Summary

Choose **lean cuts**.

Cook using **low-fat methods**.

Limit **processed pork**.

Watch **portion sizes**.