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Trends in meat consumption in the USA.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: To characterize the trends, distribution, potential determinants and public health implications of meat consumption within the USA.

DESIGN: We examined temporal trends in meat consumption using food availability data from the FAO and US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and further evaluated the meat intake by type (red, white, processed) in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) linked to the MyPyramid Equivalents Database (MPED).

RESULTS: Overall meat consumption has continued to rise in the USA and the rest of the developed world. Despite a shift towards higher poultry consumption, red meat still represents the largest proportion of meat consumed in the USA (58 %). Twenty-two per cent of the meat consumed in the USA is processed. According to the NHANES 2003-2004, total meat intake averaged 128 g/d. The type and quantities of meat reported varied by education, race, age and gender.

CONCLUSIONS: Given the plausible epidemiological evidence for red and processed meat intake in cancer and chronic disease risk, understanding the trends and determinants of meat consumption in the USA, where meat is consumed at more than three times the global average, should be particularly pertinent to researchers and other public health professionals aiming to reduce the global burden of chronic disease.

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