

Consumption of grilled meat linked to higher mortality risk among breast cancer survivors

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Findings published in *JNCI: Journal of the National Cancer Institute* indicate that higher consumption of grilled, barbecued, and smoked meat may increase the mortality risk among breast cancer survivors. In the study, entitled "Grilled, Barbecued, and Smoked Meat Intake and Survival Following Breast Cancer," Humberto Parada, Jr., MPH, and colleagues evaluated the link between grilled/barbecued and smoked meats and the survival time after breast cancer.

High-temperature cooked [meat intake](#) is a highly prevalent source of [polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons](#) and other carcinogenic chemicals and has been associated with [breast cancer](#) incidence, but this study assessed whether intake is related to survival after breast cancer.

In a study population of 1508 Long Island women with breast cancer, subjects were interviewed and asked about their consumption of four types of grilled, barbecued, and smoked meat. The women were asked about their intake in each decade of life and were asked to specify the seasons in which the foods were most frequently consumed. At the five-year follow-up, participants responded to the same questions, which asked about the time period since the original questionnaire.

Findings include:

- Among the 1508 case women, 597 deaths were identified, 237 (39.7%) of which were related to breast cancer, after a median duration of follow-up of 17.6 years.
- Compared with low intake, high intake of grilled/barbecued and smoked meat prior to diagnosis was associated with a 23% increased hazard of all-cause mortality.
- High vs low intake of smoked beef/lamb/pork intake was associated with

a 17% increased hazard of all-cause and a 23% increased hazard of breast cancer-specific mortality.

- Lifetime grilled/barbecued and smoked meat intake and prediagnosis annual intake of grilled/barbecued beef/lamb/pork and poultry/fish were not associated with mortality.
- Compared with women with low prediagnosis and low postdiagnosis intake of grilled/barbecued and smoked meat, continued high intake was associated with a 31% increased hazard of all-cause mortality.
- The increase in risk of death from any cause was similar in magnitude among women who reported high prediagnosis and low postdiagnosis intake of grilled/barbecued and smoked meat.

The study's findings support the hypothesis that high consumption of grilled, barbecued, and smoked meat may increase [mortality](#) after breast cancer.

More information: Humberto Parada et al, Grilled, Barbecued, and Smoked Meat Intake and Survival Following Breast Cancer, *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* (2017). [DOI: 10.1093/jnci/djw299](#)

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