

Study gives more reasons for passing on red meat

WASHINGTON: People who eat a lot of red meat are more likely to die at any given time than those who go light on the burgers and hot dogs, according to a US study that followed more than 100,000 people over several decades.

Researchers whose findings appeared in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* said that the more servings of both processed and unprocessed red meat people

reported eating daily, the higher their chances of dying over a more than 20-year span.

"Red meat and especially processed red meat contains a lot of compounds and chemicals that have been linked to chronic disease risk," said Frank Hu, at the Harvard School of Public Health and one of the study leaders.

Research has suggested that the saturated fat and cholesterol in red

meat is linked to plaque buildup in arteries, which increases the risk of heart disease, while cooking red meat produces more carcinogens. A recent study said that eating more meat was associated with a greater risk of kidney cancer.

Hu and his colleagues used data from two large, ongoing studies of US doctors and nurses who filled out regular questionnaires about their typical eating habits as well as physical activity, smoking and family history.

The current report includes information from about 38,000 middle-aged men followed for an average of 22 years after their first survey and 84,000 women tracked for 28 years.

The lightest meat eaters reported getting half a serving or less of meat per day, while the study's biggest meat-lovers had red meat twice or three times daily. Three ounces (85 gm) of unprocessed meat, one hot dog or two slices of bacon was counted as a serving.

About 24,000 participants died over the two-plus decades that researchers followed them. Hu and his team calculated that the

Red meat health risk

A diet high in red meat can increase the risk of death from cancer and heart problems, according to a study by researchers at Harvard Medical School



Processed meat: Daily serving – equivalent to two slices of bacon or one hot dog – increased risk of dying from heart disease by 21% and from cancer by 16%



Steak: Cutting amount to 42 grams a day – equivalent to one large steak a week – could prevent almost one in 10 early deaths in men and one in 13 in women

Source: Self-reporting of diet by 37,698 men and 83,644 women over 28 years © GRAPHIC NEWS

chance of dying was 12% higher for every extra serving of red meat the men and women had eaten each day. – Reuters