

A big, juicy steak can be part of your nutrition plan — if you pick the right cut

# Seeing Red

By Eric Butterman

If you thought red meat only came in fatty proportions, it's time to get the skinny on how lean it can be!

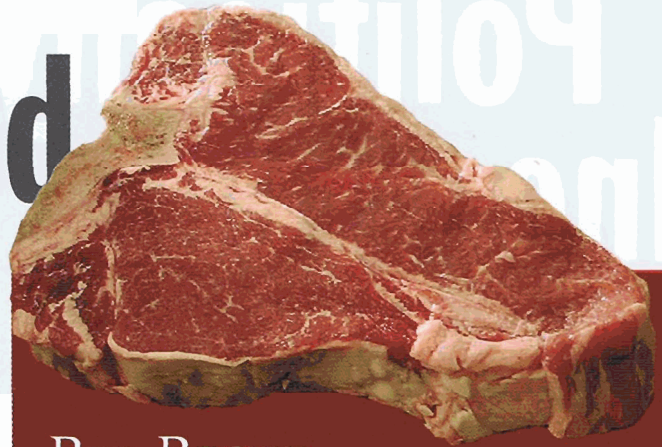
We all know the usual things you can eat to gain muscle: Nutrition shake anyone? How many different ways did you eat chicken this year? Or did you just make like "Rocky," ignore salmonella warnings and drink egg yolk out of a glass? OK, now how many of you ate red meat? I can hear your gasps. Red meat? Wait, isn't that bad for you? Not necessarily, says Phil Goglia, nutritionist and author of *Turn Up The Heat*.

"Red meat is a great alternative to chicken because it does a better job when it comes to tissue repair," he says. "The reason so many think red meat is a fatty offender is because they keep getting the wrong cuts." Goglia says the leaner red meats are flank steak, London Broil, round steak and *filet mignon*. The ones filled with a high saturation of fat are *ribeye*, T-bone, porterhouse and prime rib. "Leaner meats are actually close to the fat content of chicken breast and offer a slightly better nutrient and mineral value," he says. "By the way, McDonald's burgers are not the leanest."

## Prepare! Prepare! Prepare!

Now that we know it's OK to "go red," let's look at some ways to prepare it. "I know people love their grills," Goglia says, "but it's not the only option. You can wok, steam, stir-fry or even make kabobs. You can go with thin slices when you feel like it or blacken it. One of the reasons people get sick of the same food is because they only prepare it one way." Regardless of the previous options laid out, one thing Goglia believes is a must is to find the right seasoning. "Dry seasonings to make flavorings are very popular," he says. "I recommend Greek seasoning or Italian seasoning and use an array of sauces. One example is doing a meat marinade in a low-calorie Italian dressing for four hours and then grilling it for a distinct flavor. Lime and pineapple juice marinade is also good."

If you worry about the food sticking then spray with olive oil or Pam, says Goglia. In addition, remember that time isn't just about how long it takes you to prepare the meal—it's also when you want to eat. Goglia recommends eating any kind of protein at night, because you're at rest, which is when your muscle tissue can take the best advantage.



## RED RECIPE

If Goglia could choose only one red meat recipe, he'd put a big red check by this one.

- Begin by pounding out a lean cut of meat and then get out your spinach, asparagus, olive oil and dry seasonings (use Cajun, Italian, etc.).
- Roll the beaten seasoned flank steak around the asparagus spears and spinach and then tie it.
- You can grill for twenty minutes or bake at 325 degrees for the same amount of time.
- As an alternative, you can substitute in pepper, jalapeno spice or salt after you roll it.

## Other Red Alerts

Besides the fat concern, another common red meat worry is mad cow disease, says Goglia. "I tell my clients not to worry too much," he says. "Mad cow mostly comes from ground red meat because you're grinding up the bone. What few realize is that mad cow is actually a bone marrow disease from the cow and that's the primary way it's transferred. So instead of not eating meat, you should concentrate on making sure not to eat the cow's bone marrow."

But assuming you choose healthy meat, it's up to you to make sure it stays that way. Watch out for those barbecue sauce toppings that you know are no-nos. Also, watch your side dishes. "There's something about a piece of red meat that makes people want to plop down heavy mashed potatoes or a baked potato with a lot of butter," says Goglia. "Even if you have a healthy main dish, if you blow it on the other parts of your meal, the lean meat's not going to matter."