

CAN DIABETICS EAT BEEF?

People with diabetes can eat just about any type of food as part of a balanced, portion-controlled meal or snack. The trick is knowing how much of each type of food to eat. A standard serving of lean beef, as part of a sandwich or plate of food that also includes vegetables and whole-grain foods, is a well-balanced meal for a diabetic.

Types

Because people with diabetes are at increased risk of developing heart disease, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. As a result, the diet recommended by the American Diabetes Association is a heart-healthy, plant-based diet that includes lower-fat sources of protein such as lean beef, but in measured portions. Lean cuts of beef that contain less than 10 g of fat and less than 4.5 g of saturated fat in a 3-1/2 oz. serving include tenderloin, strip steak, shoulder roast, round steak and 95 percent lean ground beef. Extra-lean cuts of beef that contain less than 5 g of fat and 2 g of saturated fat per serving include tenderloin, eye of round roast, top round, bottom round and top sirloin. Both lean and extra-lean cuts contain less than 95 mg cholesterol per serving. Choice and select cuts contain less fat than prime cuts.

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Amount

According to the American Diabetes Association, a balanced meal includes 2 to 5 oz. of meat. Another way for diabetics to look at it is that beef and other proteins should take up about one-quarter of the plate at each meal.

Preparation

Grilling, broiling, pan-broiling, stir-frying, roasting and braising are all good methods of preparing lean cuts of beef, according to the Texas Beef Council. Different cuts of beef lend themselves to different methods. Eye round or sirloin steak is best sliced and stir-fried or when marinated before grilling, broiling or pan-broiling. A tenderloin steak, on the other hand, can be grilled or broiled without marinating and is also good for stir-frying. A round steak is best when braised, or cooked in a little liquid. All visible fat should be trimmed from beef before cooking or eating.

Recipes

Diabetics can find many good lean beef recipes on the internet. Included on the University of Cincinnati Net Wellness site are crock-pot recipes for beef dishes such as BBQ Beef Sandwiches and Southwest Steak and Beans. The recipes for diabetics on the University of Illinois Extension site include Italian Beef Stir-fry and Easy Pepper Steak. A collection of recipes on the American Diabetes Association website also includes many for beef dishes.

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