

## Holiday Meat Comparison

Submitted by Beverly Burke, Marais des Cygnes District Master Food Volunteer

As the holidays get into full swing, dishes like roasts and baked hams and turkeys all start appearing at festive gatherings with increased regularity. So, how can you navigate these meals while making healthful choices? Take a look at the comparison chart below to determine which meat (if you're choosing a meat) is best for your plate.

Meat Cut	Calories (in 4 ounces)	Fat (g)	Saturated Fat (g)	Cholesterol (mg)	Sodium (mg)	Protein (g)	Iron (% DV)
Turkey Breast	110	1	0	60	240	25	6
Roasted Ham	120	2	0	30	460	10	4
Strip Steak (Beef)	144	4	1.5	67	64	25	10
Salmon Filet	161	7	1	63	49	22.5	5
Tenderloin (Beef)	162	6.5	2.5	78	68	26	14
Lamb Chop (Shoulder)	165	6.5	2.5	70	94	22.5	10
Turkey Thigh	180	10	3	80	80	21	10
Top Loin (Beef)	254	17	7	91	59	23	9
Leg of Lamb (Boneless)	261	19.5	8.5	78	64	20	10
Rib Eye (Beef)	311	25	10	77	64	20	12

You may notice that **cut matters**. While a strip steak and a rib eye both come from a cow, the strip steak is much leaner, lower in calories, and higher in protein. **Cuts to eat in moderation** include leg of lamb, rib eye, and top loin, while roast turkey breast, roast ham, and strip steak all come in much **lower on the calorie scale**.

However, calories aren't everything. Roasted ham is packed with **sodium**, with 460 grams in a single 4-ounce serving. Top loin and turkey thighs are similarly loaded with **cholesterol**, much more than one would expect from their calorie totals.

Beef tenderloin is highest in **protein**, with turkey breast and strip steak right on its heels (so to speak), and that same cut is also highest in **iron**, with rib eye right on its heels.

So if you eat meat, take this information to make the most healthful choices at your next holiday gathering. And here are **a few more tips** for navigating the meat minefield at this time of year...

- Pay attention to portion sizes. A 3-ounce cooked portion is about the size of a deck of cards.
- Trim fat from meat and remove skin from poultry before eating.
- Bake, broil, microwave, poach or roast instead of frying.
- When you roast, place the meat on a rack so the fat can drip away.
- Use fat-free ingredients such as fruit juice, wine or defatted broth to baste meats and poultry.
- Fresh or frozen fish is often a good bet, and most Americans aren't consuming enough fish in their daily eating patterns, so consider fish for the New Year.

Source: Judy Doherty, Foodandhealth.com; For more information on nutrition, food safety, health, or family and child development contact the Marais des Cygnes Extension District Paola (913-294-4306) or Mound City (913-795-2829) offices, or write to [fmeastwo@ksu.edu](mailto:fmeastwo@ksu.edu) or check out our website: [www.maraisdescyignes.k-state.edu](http://www.maraisdescyignes.k-state.edu)