



Bacon, hot dogs, corned beef and other types of processed red meat significantly increase the risk for developing cancer, and all types of red meat "probably" increase the risk as well, according to a new report from the World Health Organization.

The WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer, or IARC, report is based on decades of research, though its conclusions were far from unanimous among members of the panel. The report also is expected to be controversial in Western countries, especially the United States, where red meat is a staple of most people's basic diet.

"These findings further support current public health recommendations to limit intake of meat," said Dr. Christopher Wild, director of the IARC, in a press release. "At the same time, red meat has nutritional value. Therefore, these results are important in enabling governments and international regulatory agencies to conduct risk assessments, in order to balance the risks and benefits of eating red meat and processed meat, and to provide the best possible dietary recommendations."

Red meat is defined by the IARC as any unprocessed mammalian muscle meat, such as beef, veal, pork, lamb, and goat, including meat sold minced or frozen. Processed red meats are defined as having been enhanced for flavor or preservation by methods that include salting, curing, fermentation, or smoking, among others.

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