

## FAT IN MEAT & DAIRY INCREASE PANCREATIC CANCER

Cancer of the pancreas, the large organ located horizontally behind the bottom part of the stomach, typically spreads quickly and is usually deadly. Symptoms are often vague at first and a diagnosis is typically not made until the malignancy is advanced and treatment is futile. In fact, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) predicts that almost 42,500 thousand Americans will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2009 and the vast majority of these people, about 35,250 will die from the disease. Clearly, the best way to deal with pancreatic cancer is to prevent it in the first place. But how? According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the known causes of the disease include long term diabetes, smoking and chronic inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis). However, a new study points to another, important and **avoidable** cause of pancreatic cancer --- specifically, eating fat in red meat and dairy products. The research, just published online in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, was conducted because previous studies that attempted to relate fat consumption to the disease reached inconclusive results. But this study concludes the link between dietary animal fat and pancreatic cancer appears to be strong. Rachael Z. Stolzenberg-Solomon, PhD, of the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in Bethesda, Maryland, and colleagues investigated a cohort of over 500,000 people from the NIH's AARP Diet and Health Study. Participants in the study filled out food frequency questionnaires in 1995 and 1996 and follow-ups were conducted by the researchers every six years or so in order to track the research subjects' health, including whether any developed pancreatic cancer. Men and women whose diets included high amounts of total fats had 53 percent and 23 percent increased rates of pancreatic cancer, respectively, compared with men and women who had low fat consumption. Overall, the research subjects who ate high amounts of saturated animal fat had a 36 percent higher rate of pancreatic cancer compared with those who ate low amounts. Another important finding: fat found in vegetables was not associated at all with cancer of the pancreas. "We observed positive associations between pancreatic cancer and intakes of total, saturated, and monounsaturated fat overall, particularly from red meat and dairy food sources. We did not

observe any consistent association with polyunsaturated or fat from plant food sources," the authors wrote in the journal article. ***"Altogether, these results suggest a role for animal fat in pancreatic carcinogenesis."*** There's even more good news about cancer prevention through diet. Other research just published in the *British Journal of Cancer* by Oxford University scientists concludes that not eating meat lowers the risk of many cancers, including stomach and bladder malignancies as well as leukemia, by close to 50 percent.