

Hop into the new red meat – the nutritional benefits of kangaroo

A lot of popular diets these days focus on a high-protein eating plan, so for people who want to have meat as their major source of protein, it's important to make sure that it's good meat.

Commercially available meats are generally very high in saturated fat – sirloin steak, for example, can be up to 72 per cent fat – and often provide little in the way of essential omega-3 fatty acids. Not only that, farmed meat frequently contains things that we really wouldn't like to see at dinner such as pesticides, antibiotics, parasites, salmonella and E.coli. Manufactured meats are just plain scary with rancid and mutagenic by-products from the processing process that have no place in a human body.

If you want to eat meat, go for organic meat, free from as much human intervention as possible. If red's your favourite colour, I suggest you take a look at kangaroo. Studies headed by Professor Kerin O'Dea, Dean of Health at Deakin University in Victoria, found that kangaroo meat has considerably lower levels of fat – less than two per cent – than traditional meats such as pork, lamb and beef, and it has the lowest levels of saturated fat too. It also has the highest percentage of protein, and is the richest source of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which is found in grass-eating animals. This is important because CLA is a 'good' fat, essential to reducing atherosclerosis (the hardening and narrowing of the arteries) and obesity and may also have anti-carcinogenic and anti-diabetic properties.

What all that means to us is that kangaroo is the ideal meat for a healthy heart.

The great news is that kangaroo is becoming mainstream and is now available in most major Australian supermarkets – and you can get everything from steaks, to mince, roasts and even 'kanga bangas' (sausages) for your next barbecue. Because kangaroo is basically all muscle, it stays really tender when you cook it and can be far tastier than regular meats. And you can make pretty much anything out of it! So if you're after the ultimate protein boost, hop into the butcher and grab yourself some of the 'new' red meat.

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