



## Dietary Guidelines for Americans—How Lamb Fits

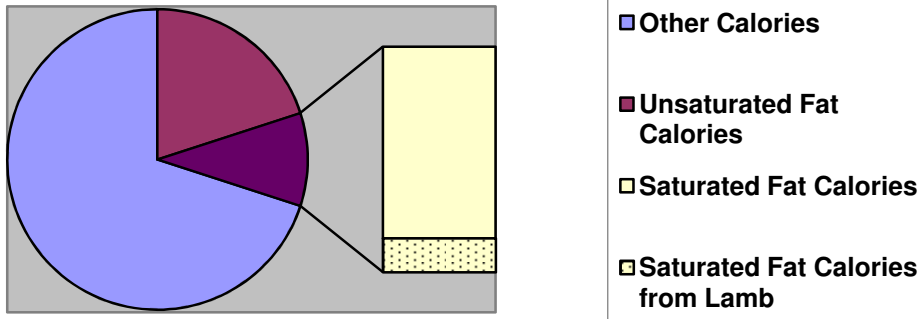
The 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (USHHS, 2005) are evidence-based recommendations for how Americans can eat and exercise to promote optimum health and maintain a healthy weight. The advice in the guidelines is framed within the food groups represented in the revised food pyramid, accessible at [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) (USDA). MyPyramid individualizes for calories and amounts of food based on age, gender, height, weight, and activity. The range of 1,000 to 3,200 calories provides dietary patterns that include a range of 2 to 7 ounces of cooked meat (or meat substitutes) per day. The overall dietary pattern provides 20 percent to 35 percent of calories from fat, less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat, and less than 300 milligrams cholesterol per day. Lamb is one example of a meat that can be included in the daily meat allowance and dietary pattern.

To stay within the fat allowances, the guidelines advise selecting lean choices and low-fat preparation methods. Adhering to the advice to select lean or low-fat meat choices, one can select various cuts from the leg or loin of the lamb. Fat should be trimmed to either  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch or  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch on the perimeter of the cut. As mentioned earlier, the average nutritional analysis of lamb meets the FDA criteria for lean.

How does lamb compare with the fat recommendations within the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*?

- Limiting dietary fat to 20 to 35 percent of calories would represent 44 to 78 grams of fat daily when 2,000 calories are consumed. On average, a 3-ounce portion of lamb provides 8 grams of total fat.
- Limiting saturated fat to less than 10 percent of 2,000 calories would allow 20 grams of saturated fat daily. Figure 1 illustrates the small portion (about 15 percent) of the saturated fat allowance a 3-ounce lamb portion provides (3 grams of the 20 grams of saturated fat allowance), on average. (For people with high LDL cholesterol, saturated fat should be limited further to less than 7 percent or about 16 grams of saturated fat in a 2,000 calorie diet.) Table 2 compares the saturated fat contribution of a portion of lamb with the saturated fat allowance at less than 10 percent and less than 7 percent of calories.
- Dietary cholesterol should be limited to less than 300 milligrams daily; 3 ounces of lamb provides 80 milligrams of cholesterol, on average.

**Figure 1. Proportion of Saturated Fat Allowance Allocated in 3-Ounce Cooked Lamb**



**Table 2. Saturated Fat Allowance at Different Calorie Levels**

	Calorie Level	Saturated Fat (in g) allowed at	
		<10%	<7%
	1600	18 g or less	12 g or less
	2000	20 g or less*	16 g or less
	2500	25 g or less*	19 g or less
3-ounce lamb composite	175	3 g	3 g

\* values rounded to be the same as those on the Nutrition Facts Panel

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