

## August is *Psoriasis Awareness* Month

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Beef Kabobs

Taming the Beast:  
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Avoid Overeating

Every year about 150,000 to 260,000 people are newly diagnosed with psoriasis, a non-contagious disease that affects 7.5 million Americans.

Psoriasis is a life-long condition that affects the immune system. There are several types of psoriasis, but plaque psoriasis is the most common. Plaque psoriasis is characterized by raised, inflamed, red lesions covered by a silvery white scale and is typically found on the elbows, knees, scalp and lower back. The patches tend to be itchy and sore.

According to the National Psoriasis Foundation, up to 30 percent of people with psoriasis also suffer from psoriatic arthritis, a condition that causes swollen, tender and painful joints.



[www.psoriasis.org](http://www.psoriasis.org)  
[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)  
[www.niams.nih.gov](http://www.niams.nih.gov)  
[www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org)

### Occurrence

Psoriasis occurs when skin cells, which normally mature and fall off the body surface, mature much faster and pile up. The severity of psoriasis varies from person-to-person, and while research has not identified its cause, scientists have discovered that genetics play a role. Certain things can trigger an outbreak in different people, like stress, weather, trauma and even smoking or consuming alcohol.

General psoriasis often appears between the ages of 15 - 25 but can develop at any age, and is found equally in males and females. On the other hand, psoriatic arthritis appears mostly in women between the ages of 30 and 50. There are no blood tests or diagnostic tools to diagnose psoriasis; only your doctor can tell if you have this condition.

### Living with Psoriasis

If you have psoriasis, it's important to work with your doctor to find the best treatment for your condition. Treatments vary depending on the type of psoriasis and area, but generally include topical medicines, light or phototherapy, and/or medication.

Psoriasis affects more than the skin and joints. Research shows the disease can be directly associated with other serious conditions like diabetes, obesity, heart disease and even depression. Embracing a whole-body wellness program that includes healthy eating, regular exercise and reduced stress can improve your immune system and reduce your risk for other chronic conditions.

Learn more about psoriasis by browsing WebMD's extensive list of health topics. Just go to [www.bcbsfl.com](http://www.bcbsfl.com) and log on to **MyBlueService**. Access the **Living Healthy** tab and select **A to Z Health Topics**.

# Summer Grilling Safety

Nothing says summer like grilling out. Whether you're a fan of a gas grill or charcoal, food just seems to taste better when cooked over an open flame.

## But did you know that grilling could pose a health risk?

When meats are cooked at high temperatures, cancer-causing chemicals called heterocyclic amines (HCAs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are formed. HCAs come from the amino acids and creatine found in all muscle meat (beef, pork, poultry and fish) and PAHs are chemicals found in the smoke that adhere to food during grilling.

The good news is you don't have to nix your summer grilling plans. Just practice a few grilling precautions to reduce HCAs and PAHs from forming:



- **Choose leaner meats.** Lean-cut meats are less likely to drip on the coals and produce smoke, reducing PAHs.
- **Marinate.** Marinating with vinegars and citrus juices does more than reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses. Marinating reduces HCAs by as much as 90%.
- **Do the wave.** Microwaving meats for two minutes before you grill reduces HCA by 90%. If any liquid forms during microwaving, pour it off before grilling to further reduce HCAs.
- **Not so hot!** Temperature is the biggest factor in forming HCAs. Your best bet is to reduce the grilling temperature to less than 390 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Turn it over.** Flames cause both HCAs and PAHs, so keep the temperature lower and turn meat frequently to prevent flare ups.
- **Don't overcook.** Use a meat thermometer to cook meats thoroughly and avoid overcooking. The more well-done or overcooked the meat is, the more HCAs.
- **Pass on the gravy.** Avoid making gravy from meat drippings because it contains substantial amounts of HCAs.
- **Go meatless.** HCAs and PAHs do not form on vegetables and fruits. With vegetables, the sky is the limit. And they taste even better grilled!

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
[www.atsdr.cdc.gov](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov)  
[blog.nutritiondata.com](http://blog.nutritiondata.com)

## Ask the Coach

**Q** I have trouble sticking to an exercise plan once I start. How can I exercise more consistently?

**A** People who struggle to be physically active on a regular basis often cite reasons such as lack of time, boredom or dislike for traditional exercise. While these issues appear to be true challenges, they are often only *symptoms* of the real problem, which is a mismatch between a person's approach to exercise and their personality.

Understanding and embracing your fitness personality is the best way to maximize your success with consistent fitness. Consider your natural strengths, preferences and tendencies. Do you like to exercise alone or with others? Do you need to have fun while exercising or would you approach it in the same manner as work? Would you rather be indoors or outdoors? Do you like physical activity to be obvious or disguised as something else?

Use the answers to these questions to choose activities you'll most enjoy and find rewarding. Keep in mind that all forms of physical activity – from treadmills and gyms to dancing lessons, gardening, or skiing – improve fitness and health. Let your personality lead the way.

Discover your fitness personality by taking an eight minute quiz based on the Myers-Briggs personality test by visiting [www.the8colors.com](http://www.the8colors.com). You'll use personalized information to create an exercise plan you'll never quit!

# Fresh & Healthy

Recipe of the Month

## Grilled Pineapple Beef Kabobs

### Ingredients

- 1 can (6 oz) unsweetened pineapple juice
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 3 TBSP cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 1/2 lb beef top sirloin steak, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 fresh pineapple, peeled and cut into 1 inch pieces
- 12 large fresh mushrooms
- 1 medium sweet red pepper, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 medium sweet yellow pepper, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 medium red onion, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 2 1/2 cups uncooked quick brown rice



### Directions

In a small bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Pour 3/4 cup of mixture into a large re-sealable plastic bag, saving the rest for later. Add beef and seal bag; turn to coat. Refrigerate 1 to 4 hours. Cover and refrigerate remaining marinade for basting.

Spray cold grill rack with cooking spray. Drain and discard marinade. On 12 metal or soaked wooden skewers, alternately thread the beef, pineapple, mushrooms, peppers and onions. Grill covered over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until meat reaches desired doneness, turning occasionally and basting frequently with reserved marinade.

Cook rice according to package directions. Serve with kabobs.

Yield: 6 servings.

**Nutrition Facts:** 1 serving: 2 kabobs with 3/4 cup rice; 412 calories; 5 g fat (2 g saturated fat); 46 mg cholesterol; 534 mg sodium; 60 g carbohydrate; 4 g fiber; 31 g protein

# Taming the Beast: How to Avoid Overeating

These days, it's easier than ever to overeat. Serving dishes and food portions are two to three times bigger than they were just a few years ago and the extra fat, sugar and salt added to many common food items make the "pleasure factor" hard to overcome. What's more, food is more convenient and available almost wherever we go, making it very difficult to maintain control of our eating when we're away from home.

## How can we maintain control over how much we eat?

The key to long-term weight management is to practice eating to the point of *satisfaction*, rather than fullness. Here are a few strategies to consider:

### Before you eat:

- Identify how hungry you are now, and how you want to feel after you eat, by using a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = ravenous; 5 = satisfied; 10 = stuffed and sick). Then, estimate how much food it will take to get you there.
- Prepare or serve yourself only the amount you determined. If you are eating at a restaurant, draw a line in your plate or box up what you don't need right away.
- Create a pleasant environment with minimal distractions. Avoid eating while doing other things, such as talking on the phone, watching TV, working on your computer or engaging in a negative conversation, which all cause mindless eating and make it difficult to put your fork down at the right time.
- Sit down! Eating through the open door of the refrigerator makes it difficult to control your portions. Make it a point to always sit at a table every time you eat.

### While you eat:

- Decide what you want to eat first. If you save the best for last, you'll fill up on the things you don't enjoy as much and then eat your favorite thing anyway, regardless of how full you are.
- Appreciate the food, the environment and the occasion. Allow yourself to really experience the moment so you get more pleasure out of less food.

- Take small bites, putting your fork down and chewing fully between bites. Stay focused on what's in your mouth now, rather than what you'll choose next.
- About half-way through, stop eating and check in with yourself. Re-assess your hunger-fullness level.
- Decide whether or not you have met your desired level, remembering that it takes about 20 minutes for the brain to register a sense of fullness.
- If you know you're full but you're feeling the urge to eat more, ask yourself, "How will I feel if I continue to eat?" and "How will I feel if I stop now?" Remember, what you decide to do right now can be the difference between feeling guilty and stuffed, or proud and comfortable.

### When you're finished:

- Make an obvious signal to yourself and others that you are finished by putting a napkin over your plate or removing your plate from the table.
- Give your mouth a new flavor to break the urge to keep eating just because it tastes good. Brush your teeth, eat a mint or chew a piece of gum.
- Remove yourself from the eating environment right away if necessary. Take a walk outside or get involved in something pleasurable. If you "sneak" in lots of calories during clean-up, wait until the urge to continue eating has subsided before you begin.

Don't forget to congratulate yourself on eating only to the point of satisfaction and take note of the things that led to your success so you can do it again next time!

Could your diet use a nutritional tune-up? WebMD's Healthy Nutrition wellness program can help you make lifestyle changes and healthy choices that don't have to be bland and boring. Simply go to [www.bcbsfl.com](http://www.bcbsfl.com) and log on to **MyBlueService**. Access the **Living Healthy** tab, select **Wellness Programs** and then **Healthy Nutrition**.



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