



October 29, 2015 – Grand Rapids, MI

Processed Meat and Cancer: The Headlines

Processed Meat Causes Cancer! That was the type of headline that dominated the Internet news sites, newspapers, and local and network news. One very well known nutrition expert wrote this comment:

The just-released report from the International Agency for Research on Cancer judging processed meat as clearly carcinogenic and red meat as probably carcinogenic has caused consternation among meat producers and consumers.

Note the verbiage that says processed meat is clearly carcinogenic. More about that in a minute. California just announced it's considering adding processed meat to the carcinogen list; that would require a warning label to be put on meats.

All this for a report that isn't published yet; that's right, the World Health Organization committee hasn't published the document. They have published a summary in British medical journal *The Lancet* (1), and they have released a press release. Oh, those press releases! That's where all these headlines come from. But the actual report is unavailable. How can we know whether a food causes cancer when we haven't read the research used to publish the report?



Well, I've read some of the studies they cited in the *Lancet* article. I'll put this all in perspective for you on Saturday. Until then, I wouldn't throw out the bacon or ham just yet.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045\(15\)00444-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(15)00444-1).

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