

ARTICLE: TOO MUCH MEAT CAN BE DEADLY: STUDY

Eating large amounts of red and processed meat leaves you at greater risk of cancer, a major report warned yesterday.

One in 10 cases of both lung and bowel cancer could be prevented if people cut down on beef, lamb, pork, sausages, ham and bacon. Red meat also increases the risk of cancers of the liver and oesophagus, the study found.

The research involving nearly 500,000 people, adds to growing evidence that too much meat can be harmful.

Last month, a report from the World Cancer Research Fund warned that red meat was a major contributor to cancer and urged people to stop eating processed bacon, ham and sausages.

The latest findings, published yesterday in the science journal *PLoS Medicine*, reach a similar conclusion.

Researchers at the US National Cancer Institute looked at the records of 494,000 people aged 50 – 71 taking part in an extensive diet and health study.

Volunteers filled in detailed questionnaires about their dietary habits over the previous year. Scientists then worked out what proportion of calories came from red and processed meat.

The researchers then looked at the medical histories of the 20 per cent of volunteers who ate the most meat, and compared them with the 20 per cent who ate the least.

The biggest red meat eaters were 25 per cent more likely to be diagnosed with bowel cancer during the eight year study, and 20 per cent more likely to develop lung cancer. For processed meat, the increased risk was 20 per cent and 16 per cent respectively.

The American study also linked red meat to liver and oesophageal cancer, but the other cancers appeared to be “largely unaffected” by meat in the diet, according to the author, Dr Amanda Cross.

REF: The Daily Telegraph Wednesday December 12, 2007.