Possible Link Between Nitrate/Nitrite Salts In Processed Meat And Pancreatic Cancer?

Printed from https://www.cancerquest.org/newsroom/2011/07/possible-link-between-nitratenitrite-salts-processed-meat-and-pancreatic-cancer on 11/23/2026



Nitrate and nitrite salt consumption causes cancer in animals. Because these chemcials are found at high levels in cured meats such as ham, bacon, and hot dogs, their role in human cancer is of great interest. Pancreatic cancer was the focus of this investigation.

Research presented in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* used information obtained from a large group of people (>300,000) over a ten year period, the researchers found evidence of a possible linkage between pancreatic cancer and consumption of nitrite and nitrate in those men that consumed the largest amounts. The results were not statistically significant but trends were apparent. The linkage was not apparent in women. Unfortunately, the results are not conclusive. They also do not rule out the possible role of nitrates/nitrites in other forms of cancer.

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