Dietary guidelines and meat
I was very pleased to see that the September/October issue of Minnesota Medicine featured articles on food. Good nutrition is essential for health.

However, I was surprised that the article by DiNicolantonio, Harcombe and O’Keefe recommended eating more meat. By contrast, the authors of the Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee state that “higher intake of red and processed meats was identified as detrimental compared to lower intake.”

The report also states:
“The overall body of evidence examined by the 2015 DGAC [Dietary Guideline Advisory Committee] identifies that a healthy dietary pattern is higher in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low- or non-fat dairy, seafood, legumes and nuts; moderate in alcohol (among adults); lower in red and processed meat; and low in sugar-sweetened foods and drinks and refined grains. Vegetables and fruit are the only characteristics of the diet that were consistently identified in every conclusion statement across the health outcomes.”

Response: I think Dr. Kottke is misinterpreting what our article states. We never once recommended “eating more red meat” because we never address what an ideal quantity of red meat intake is (in fact, no one can actually answer that question with 100 percent certainty). We simply recommended: “Eat natural foods, meat, fish, eggs, dairy products, avocados, nuts and seeds, and the natural fats contained therein.” We also do not recommend eating processed meats.

James H. O’Keefe, MD
James J. DiNicolantonio, PharmD