SMG Health

GI Made Simple

Nutrition

The Glycemic Index (GI) is way of rating foods according to their ability to raise blood sugar levels. High GI foods will elevate blood sugar quickly, because this triggers an insulin response, glucose levels subside quickly.

Low GI food does not raise blood sugar as much. It takes longer for the blood sugar level to return to baseline as the insulin response is not as pronounced.

These factors explain why high GI gives a quick but often short lived sugar high, whilst low GI is more "satisfying" in terms of satiety over a longer period. For appetite control, low GI foods won't have you raiding the pantry every half hour to "top up" your blood glucose.

Glycemic Load (GL)

When we multiply GI by serving size we get GL – Glycemic Load. This is the most important thing to focus on when consuming carbohydrates. Having the occasional high GI snack (ie. a few jelly beans) is no big deal – GL will be low despite the high GI because serving size is small.
We therefore need to focus on "big carbs" – rice, pasta, potatoes, cereals, bread and soft drinks. These are the things we can and often do consume in large quantities, so taking the low GI option with these items will ensure low GL.

Keep Meals Low GI

The latest evidence shows that the GI of the overall diet we eat is more important than the GI of individual foods. The World Health Organisation recommends we base our diets on low GI foods to prevent common chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes.

Tips

• Choose low or moderate GI foods as a base for your meal, and by adding protein foods (e.g: meats, eggs, nuts), it will also lower the overall GI of the meal. Protein foods contain no (or very little) carbohydrates, so have a GI rating of 0.

• When eating high GI foods, balance them by eating something low GI at the same time. For example, serve white potato (high GI) with sweet potato (low GI). This will moderate the GI value of the meal.

Benefits of a Low GI Eating Plan

Diabetes

- Aids in long term blood sugar control and lower, steadier insulin levels
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
- Reduces insulin levels and insulin resistance

Weight Management

- Helps control appetite and delay hunger
- Lowers insulin levels making it easier to lose weight

Sports Nutrition

- Can improve endurance and delay the onset of fatigue
- Allows a steady, slow release of energy into the bloodstream during exercise

Heart Health

- Helps keep blood pressure and cholesterol levels down
- Assists weight control, indirectly improving heart health

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Food Group	High GI Foods	Medium GI Foods	Low GI Foods
Cereal Grain Foods	White bread Rye bread English muffin Bagel Jasmine rice Long grain rice Instant cooked rice Cornflakes Rice Bubbles Sultana Bran Rice cakes	Wholemeal bread Crumpet Pita bread Basmati rice Doongara rice Couscous JustRight Weet-Bix Pasta Nutrigrain Ryvita Biscuits	Mixed grain bread Soy and Linseed bread Fruitbread Porridge Muesli All Bran Guardian
Starchy Vegetables	Broad beans Désirée potatoes	New potatoes Pontiac potatoes	Canned new potato Sweet potato Chickpeas Baked beans Lentils Legumes Sweetcorn
Fruit	Pitted dates Sweetened dried cranberries	Banana Rockmelon Mango	Apple Orange Grapes Orange juice Most other fruits
Other	Biscuits Donuts Sports drinks Pretzels Lamingtons	Milk Arrowroot Biscuits Muffins/cake type Fruit muesli bars Ice-cream Cordial Sao biscuits	Milk Yoghurt Other dairy products Green peas Other non-starchy vegetables

For more foods and their GI values see:

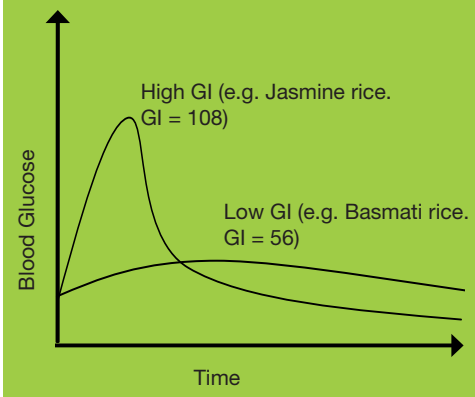
www.glycemicindex.com

High GI: 70 and above

Medium GI: 56 - 69

Low GI: 55 and under

Low vs High GI Comparison Chart



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