

GI List of Carbohydrate foods

LOW GI (0-55): Eat most of the time, including before exercise

Frequent Foods



Often Foods



Dairy

Low fat/fat free milk (plain and flavoured)
Low fat/fat free yoghurt (plain and sweetend)
Low fat/fat free custard (sweetend and unsweetened)
Low fat ice cream (sweetend and artificially sweetend)

Cereals

Pro-Nutro Whole wheat (original and apple bake)
Future Life (all types and flavours)
High fibre Bran
Oatbran
Cooled Mealiemeal with added corn
Any low GI muesli (read labels)

Bread

Provita
Pumpnickel bread
Seed loaf bread
Any low GI bread (read labels)

Legumes

All dry and canned beans, peas, lentils
Baked beans and tinned pasta and beans
Brown rice with lentils
Pearled wheat with lentils
Pearled barley with lentils/beans
Soup mix

Starches

Pearled barley and pearled wheat
Pasta (made from Durum wheat)
Brown rice, brown Basmati rice with lentils
Sweet potato
Mealies whole corns, Cooled samp

Fruit

All deciduous fruit – apples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums, cherries and berries
All citrus fruit – oranges, naartjies, grapefruit, lemons, lime
Kiwi and grapes – ½ cup

Vegetables

All those that are not intermediate or high GI
Tomato juice

Snacks/sugars

Sugar free/low GI jam
Sugar free jelly
Sugar free sweets and chocolates
Xylitol, Sugalite, Sorbitol, Equisweet

Drinks

Sugar free cold drinks, sugar free mineral water
Appletizer, Biozest, Sustagen, Lite ice teas, Lite sports drinks
Milo made with milk
Bokomo Up 'n Go Vanilla

Intermediate GI (56-69): Eat after moderate exercise

Sometimes Foods



Dairy

None

Cereals

All Bran flakes, Pronutro Flakes, Taystee wheat, Creamy pap – Mabele, Kellog's Special K, Frosties – Kellog's, Corn Pops, Strawberry Pops, Shredded wheat, Maximise
Oats – cooked, Mealiemeal – cooled and reheated
Ryevita

Starches

Basmati rice – brown or white
Brown rice
Sweetcorn
Baby potatoes with skin on
Whole wheat couscous
Mealiemeal - reheated

Fruit

Tropical fruits – banana, mango, pawpaw, pineapple, litchis
Dried apples, peaches, currants, raisins

Vegetables

Spinach/marog, Beetroot

Snacks/sugar

Digestive biscuits, low fat biscuits with oat bran
Low fat bran muffins with oat bran
Low fat crumpets/pancakes with oat bran
Raw honey, sugar, fruit jam

Drinks

Juice of low GI fruits – 100ml only!
Regular less sugar cool drinks/soft drinks
Oros – orange
Ceres ice teas

High GI (70 -100): Eat after strenuous exercise or when experiencing a "low"

Best With Exercise



Dairy

None

Cereals

Weetbix, Nutrific
Instant oats, maltabella, warm mealiepap
Puffed wheat, Rice Crispies, Corn Flakes, Coco Pops, O-tees, etc
Pronutro – banana, original, chocolate, honeymelt, strawberry

Bread

All white and brown bread /sandwich loafs, rye bread, all buns and rolls

Starches

Boiled, mashed, baked and fried potatoes (slap chips)
Pasta, noodles and 2 minute noodles
Warm mealiemeal, samp and mealie rice

Fruit

Watermelon and melons
All dried fruit rolls and sweets

Vegetables

Carrots and carrot juice
Pumpkin, Hubbard squash, butternut
Parsnips, turnips
(all above has to be eaten WITH a meal)

Snacks/sugar

Sweets – boiled and jelly type
All commercial biscuits – Marie, Lemon creams, short bread, chocolate, jam filled, etc
Commercial honey, fructose, glucose, dextrose, maltose, maltodextrin, etc

Drinks

Sports and Energy drinks – Energade, Powerade, Lucozade, Game

What is the Glycemic Index (GI)?

The Glycemic Index is a blood sugar indicator. It gives us an indication of the rate at which carbohydrate rich foods affect blood sugar levels after they have been eaten. The GI is a measure, on a scale of 0 to 100, of how fast a carbohydrate food is digested and absorbed.

Why is the Glycemic Index (GI) important?

High GI foods are digested and absorbed very quickly and give a steep rise in blood glucose levels. In an effort to keep blood sugar levels as near to normal as possible, the body produces a surge of insulin. This insulin then rapidly lowers blood sugar levels, below normal levels. This results in symptoms of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) such as shakiness, sweating, heart palpitations, nervousness, irritability, extreme hunger, nausea, fatigue and even loss of consciousness in diabetics.

Low GI foods, on the other hand, are digested and absorbed slowly but steadily, and thus produce only small increases in blood glucose levels. This means that the body only needs small, steady stream of insulin to control the increase in blood glucose levels. Lower GI foods are much less taxing on the body as they prevent high levels of insulin in the blood stream. This has numerous health benefits, such as blood sugar control in diabetes, treatment of insulin resistance, protection from overweight and obesity, heart disease, inflammatory diseases and cancer.

In addition, low GI foods give the body a steady trickle of fuel for 2 ½ to 3 hours after eating, compared to only about 45 minutes from high GI foods. Thus a meal containing low GI foods would keep one feeling full and give sustained energy for much longer than a meal based on high GI foods.

Proteins and Fats

Proteins and fats are equally important in our diets. They do not have a direct effect on blood sugar levels, but they help to slow down digestion and absorption of our meals. It is therefore important to include proteins and fats in our diets and especially in every meal.

Tips on lowering the GI of meals and snacks

Remember that the purpose of the GI is not to classify foods either as “good” or “bad”. One can put together a meal with an acceptable low GI by combining the right type and amounts of foods.

Breakfast – Always give preference to low GI cereals. Should you prefer an intermediate cereal, make sure you have less of the cereal with low fat milk and another low GI food like a low GI fruit or a protein like an egg or baked beans.

South Africans love their porridge but since most cooked porridges have a higher GI it must always be cooked with milk, or eaten with milk and two tablespoons raw oat bran. Also include another low GI food like a low GI fruit or a protein.

Light meals – since most breads have a higher GI always half the amount of bread that you would normally have and add a protein source like meat, chicken, fish, baked beans or eggs. A dairy food will also lower the GI of the meal e.g. milk, maas, yoghurt or a yoghurt drink. Also add lots of salad veggies – the best way to lower the GI of any meal.

Main meals – always ensure that half of your plate is filled with low GI veggies, a quarter of your plate with a low GI starch and a quarter with low fat protein. By simply adding split lentils to mince, or thickening gravy and casseroles with oats or oat bran or liquidized baked beans you will already lower the overall GI of the meal. Legumes, vegetables, protein and dairy products are the most effective way to lower the GI of any meal.

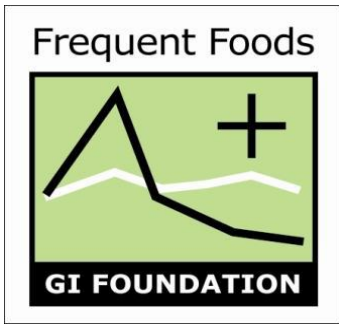
For further information go to the GI Foundation of SA website:

www.gifoundation.com

The above information is only the tip of the iceberg! To improve your health and live an optimal and prosperous life you need more information and guidance.

Information provided by:

Sorine Swanepoel
Dietitian
083 631 3663



Look out for these labels on food packaging



Food Endorsement by the Glycemic Index Foundation SA
Nutrition Science Made Easy for the Nation