

# the glycemic index

The glycemic index (GI) is a scale from 0 to 100 that ranks foods based on how quickly that food raises your blood sugar. There are 3 categories: **low GI**, **medium GI**, and **high GI**.

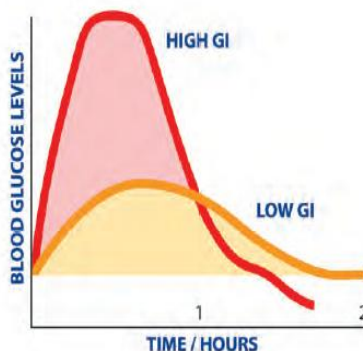
All carbohydrates that we eat will break down into sugar in our bodies, but they can affect our blood sugar levels in very different ways. We can use the glycemic index to help us manage our blood sugars.

## low GI foods

Low GI foods break down into sugar **more slowly** after we eat them, so our blood sugar does not spike up as high.

These foods are usually higher in fibre and are often more nutritious for us.

It is best to choose low GI foods as much as possible.



## high GI foods

High GI foods break down **very quickly** into sugar after we eat them, and they cause our blood sugar to spike very high.

These foods are usually very processed and are less nutritious for us.

It is best to avoid high GI foods as much as possible.

## how it can help

Choosing **low GI foods** more often will help you:

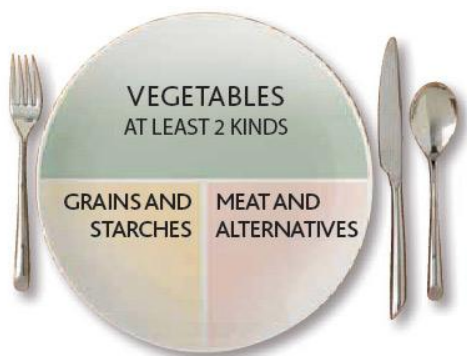
- keep your blood sugars under control, especially post meals
- reduce the stress put on your body to try to manage sudden spikes
- feel full after meals and keep your hunger levels in control
- improve your cholesterol levels

## what affects the GI?

- **cooking time:** cooking breaks down the carbohydrates in food into smaller pieces, and if we cook foods for too long, our blood sugar can spike up very quickly.
- **fibre:** foods with more fibre break down into sugar slowly and give us more energy for longer
- **balanced meals:** including protein and healthy fat can slow down the breakdown of carbohydrates in our bodies, and keep us feeling fuller for longer.



## the bottom line



- choose low GI foods as often as possible
- don't forget to consider the quality of the food itself – even though it is low GI, is it still a healthy choice?
- portion control still matters with low GI foods
- look for easy ways to add low GI foods to your diet:
  - choose whole fruit instead of juice
  - make all of your grains whole grains
  - get creative with bean & legume recipes
  - swap out cereal for oatmeal in the morning
  - enjoy plenty of vegetables with meals & snacks

	<b>low GI</b> choose more often (55 or less)		<b>medium GI</b> (56-69)		<b>high GI</b> choose less often (70 or more)	
<b>bread</b>	100% whole grain bread sourdough bread rye bread		whole wheat bread chappati roti	pita bread pumpernickel	white bread bagels french bread	waffles pancakes
<b>cereals</b>	All-Bran™ Bran Buds with psyllium™	Oat Bran™ oatmeal (rolled oats or steel-cut oats)	Bran Buds™ puffed wheat muesli	shredded wheat	Bran Flakes™ Rice Krispies™ Raisin Bran™ Corn Flakes™ Special K™	Weetabix™ Cheerios™ Grapenuts™ instant oatmeal Cream of Wheat™ (instant)
<b>grains</b>	buckwheat parboiled or converted rice pasta	barley bulgur quinoa egg noodles	long-grain white rice basmati rice brown rice	couscous rice noodles	millet short-grain rice instant rice	
<b>fruits</b>	apricot (fresh or dried) peach mango orange	berries apple dates (dried) pear	banana kiwi cantaloupe papaya	raisins figs (dried) cherries pineapple	watermelon	
<b>other starches</b>	cassava green plantains yam popcorn sweet potato soybeans	kidney beans navy beans split peas lentils chickpeas	ripe plantains sweet corn Ryvita™ rye crackers	tapioca white or Russet potatoes mashed potatoes French fries		pretzels soda crackers rice cakes or rice crackers Melba toast