



Glycemic Index

The Glycemic Index (GI) is a scale that ranks carbohydrate-rich foods by how much they raise blood glucose levels compared to a standard food. The standard food is glucoseⁱ or white bread.

When you eat food, your body changes the food you eat into sugar and uses the sugar for energy. When you have diabetes, your body is not able to use the sugar for energy. The sugar “floats” around in your blood. (this is often referred to as a ‘sugar spike’). Too much sugar in your blood over the years can lead to serious complications, like blindness, amputations, foot and kidney problems to name a few.

One way to avoid foods with a high GI is to become aware of those food products and reduce consumption of that food type. Equally important is to become familiar with foods that have a lower GI rating and making the choice to consume those types of foods. Generally, foods with a low GI take a longer period of time to digest, thereby avoiding the sugar spike that higher GI foods create. Foods with lower GI are either fiber-dense or proteins. By adding more fiber in your diet you will reduce the sugar spikes, feel more nourished, and remain satisfied with your meals for a longer period of time.

Eating foods with a low GI may help you to control your blood glucose and cholesterol levels, control your appetite and decrease the risk of heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

Use the chart below as a guide to build stronger awareness of Low to High GI food types and making food choices that work for youⁱⁱ:

| High (70 or more) | Medium (56 – 69) | Low (55 or less) |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---|
| Cornflakes (84) | Whole Wheat, Rye, Pita | All Bran (42) |
| Branflakes (74) | Puffed Wheat | Bran Buds with psyllium (42) |
| Rice Krispies (82) | Oatmeal (42 – 66) | Oat Bran (50), Whole grain pumpernickel (46) |
| Cheerios (74) | Black Bean soup | Basmati ,Brown, Long Grain, parboiled rice (48-56) |
| White Bread (71 – 77) | Green Pea soup | Barley (25), Bulgar (48), Buckwheat (54) |
| Instant rice (87) | | Popcorn (55) |
| Short Grain rice (72) | | Pear (38), Plums (39), Peach (42) |
| Pretzels (89) | | Yam, Legumes (lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, split peas, soy beans , baked beans |
| Soda crackers (74) | | |
| French Fries (75) | | |
| Watermelon (72) | | |

The efforts that you make to prevent and manage diabetes and its complications will benefit affected or at-risk Aboriginal peoples and their families.

ⁱ Wikipedia. The name "glucose" comes from the [Greek](#) word *glukus* (γλυκύς), meaning "sweet", and is the preferred name. The suffix "-ose" denotes a sugar.

ⁱⁱ Canadian Diabetes Association. GI ratings.