

DIABETES NUTRITION TAKEAWAY

When you use the glycemic index when planning meals, you'll be able to better manage your blood sugar levels. You'll also be able to find and choose foods that you enjoy. You can then incorporate them into a healthy diet plan. Managing blood sugar levels through diet is an extremely important part of managing your diabetes.

FRUITS	GLYCEMIC INDEX (GLUCOSE = 100)	SERVING SIZE (GRAMS)	GLYCEMIC LOAD PER SERVING
Apple, average	39	120	6
Banana, ripe	62	120	16
Dates, dried	42	80	18
Grapefruit	25	120	3
Grapes, average	59	120	11
Orange, average	40	120	4
Peach, average	42	120	5
Peach, canned syrup	40	120	5
Pear, average	43	120	5
Pear, canned juice	38	120	4
Prunes, pitted	29	60	10
Raisins	64	60	28
Watermelon	72	120	4



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PREHABILITATION HEALTH CONDITIONS DIABETES NUTRITION

The glycemic index (GI) is one nutritional tool you can use to help rate the quality of carbohydrates that you eat. The glycemic index measures how quickly the carbohydrates in a specific food impact your blood sugar. Foods are rated low, medium, or high on the glycemic index, depending on how quickly they raise your blood sugar level, compared to either glucose or white bread (these foods have a glycemic index rating of 100). By choosing low glycemic index foods, you can minimise dramatic increases in your blood sugar. Additionally, if you eat a high glycemic index food, you can expect that it'll increase your blood sugar more significantly. It may also cause a higher post-meal blood sugar reading.

FACTORS AFFECTING A FOODS GLYCEMIC INDEX

To assign a GI number, foods are assigned to one of three categories: low, medium, or high.

- Low GI foods have a GI of 55 or less.
- Medium GI foods are between 56 and 69.
- High GI foods are 70 or higher.

For glycemic load, under 10 is considered low, 10 to 20 is considered medium, and over 20 is considered high. Several factors are taken into account when assigning a food a glycemic rating. These factors include:

- **Acidity** - Foods that are highly acidic, such as pickles, tend to be lower on the GI than foods that aren't. This explains why breads made with lactic acid, such as sourdough bread, are lower on the GI than white bread.
- **Cooking time** - The longer a food is cooked, the higher it tends to be on the GI. When a food is cooked, the starch or carbohydrates start to break down.
- **Fibre content** - In general, foods that are high in fibre have lower glycemic ratings. The fibrous coatings around beans and seeds mean the body breaks them down more slowly. Therefore, they tend to be lower on the glycemic scale than foods without this coating.
- **Processing** - As a general rule, the more processed a food is, the higher it is on the glycemic scale. For example, fruit juice has a higher GI rating than fresh fruits.
- **Ripeness** - The more ripe a fruit or vegetable, the higher it tends to be on the GI. While there are certainly exceptions to each rule, these are some general guidelines to follow when evaluating the potential blood sugar impact of a particular food.



HOW DOES USING THE GLYCEMIC INDEX WORK?

Eating according to the GI can help you better manage your post-meal blood sugar levels. The GI can also help you determine appropriate combinations of food. For example, eating several low GI fruits and vegetables combined with a high GI food can help you maintain better blood sugar control. Other examples include adding beans to rice, a nut butter to bread, or tomato sauce to pasta.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING THE GLYCEMIC INDEX?

Choosing foods with low glycemic impact can help to keep your blood sugar levels low. However, you must also carefully adhere to the portion sizes recommended. Glycemic ratings aren't only for those with diabetes. Those trying to lose weight or decrease hunger also utilize the GI as a diet because it can control appetite. Because the food takes longer to digest in the body, a person can feel fuller for longer.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF EATING ON THE GLYCEMIC INDEX?

The glycemic index helps you pick higher quality carbohydrates. However, it's the total carbohydrate loads in your diet that ultimately affect blood sugar levels. Choosing low glycemic foods can help, but you must also manage the total carbohydrates that you consume.

Also, the GI doesn't take into account the overall nutritional value of a food. For example, just because microwave popcorn is in the middle of GI foods, doesn't mean you should live only on microwave popcorn. When you start on a diet to manage your diabetes, it's recommended that you meet with a registered dietitian who's familiar with diabetes. There are many meal plans available. Make sure to ask how you can use information on the glycemic index to best manage your blood sugar levels.

THE GLYCEMIC INDEX OF COMMON VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

Eating healthy is important to controlling diabetes. Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. Knowing both the glycemic index as well as the glycemic load of some of the more common fruits and vegetables will help you choose your favourites to incorporate into your daily diet.

VEGETABLE	GLYCEMIC INDEX (GLUCOSE = 100)	SERVING SIZE (GRAMS)	GLYCEMIC LOAD PER SERVING
Green peas, average	51	80	4
Carrots, average	35	80	2
Parsnips	52	80	4
Baked russet potato, average	111	150	33
Boiled white potato, average	82	150	21
Instant mashed potato, average	87	150	17
Sweet potato, average	70	150	22
Yam, average	54	150	20