

Glycemic Index (GI) of Carbohydrate Foods

Are you a person who finds it hard to lose or maintain weight, despite diet and exercise? When you follow a more low GI approach to your eating, the major benefits will be true and permanent fat loss and an increased metabolic rate. You will burn fat faster and keep it off. Your body may well be producing too much insulin. Insulin is the hormone produced by your pancreas when you eat sweet, sugary, or any foods which release sugar upon digestion, especially the carbohydrate (carb) foods (also known as starches). The capacity of any food to release its sugar on digestion is measured by its Glycemic Index (GI). Glucose affects insulin the most, and is the form of sugar which has a "GI index" of 100, and all other foods are measured against this.

Insulin is the hormone that allows the body's cells to utilise glucose from the blood-stream. The cells then use this glucose to make energy. If you eat too much sugar, or consume too much carbs in proportion to protein, your pancreas will produce too much insulin. This may have several harmful effects.

- Your pancreas may become fatigued over time, and incapable of producing insulin, leading to diabetes.
- Insulin resistance may develop over time. With too much insulin in your blood, the cells insulin receptors become exhausted, or are not produced in great numbers. The cells become unresponsive or insulin resistant.
- Your pancreas will produce even more insulin in response to cells being insulin resistant, leading to even further insulin resistance, loss of energy and fatigue.
- Carbohydrate foods will be stored as fat, once insulin resistance develops. Your body will stop using fat for food as an energy source. These high levels of insulin will not only make you fat, but keep you that way.
- What about my "low-fat diet"? Ok you worry about the fat in your diet, but when you eat a high-glycemic food, it will drive your blood sugar above normal which in turn causes you to secrete insulin to normalise it. When insulin 'spikes', the mechanism by which food is converted to energy is shut off, and then most of what you have eaten may well be converted to fat. So much for that silly "low-fat" approach!
- High 'GI' foods cause the body to produce excess triglycerides, a type of blood fat that makes up the majority of each cholesterol molecule.

By eating the wrong types of carbs (or simply too many, as is usually the case), your weight will be almost impossible to shift, in spite all your good intentions of exercise, diet and lifestyle modifications. We can help you to reduce high insulin levels by showing you how to limit your high GI carb intake. When the high insulin levels are lowered, your fat stores can be used as energy and the amounts of carbohydrates that will be stored as fat will be reduced, resulting in a steady but a permanent weight loss. Read all labels carefully when you buy foods, you will be surprised how many contain different types of sugars.

Eric's 5 Simple Rules of Low-GI Eating

1. **Eat foods very lightly cooked, steamed, grilled lightly or in their natural states whenever possible.**
2. **Eat foods that are more comparatively difficult to digest**, again, in a more natural state.
3. **Eat fresh foods which are high in fibre**, you will feel full longer, your digestion (and health) will improve.
4. **Eat smaller meals regularly**. Your metabolism will become more stable, your energy (and moods!) won't fluctuate that much during the day. You won't snack on junk as much anymore as well.
5. **Drink water**. The most overlooked rule. Stop right here - Water increases your metabolic rate, helps enzymes work in your digestive tract, cleanses the body, makes you feel full, and every cell in your body is comprised of 75% to 85% water. The ultimate is to drink about 30 – 35mls for every kilo you weigh. I weigh 77kgs – which means I need between 2.3 – 2.7 ltrs each day. Try it yourself, and who knows, it may even become a habit. You will find that the more you drink, the more you start enjoying water and your body will tell you when it wants water... you will actually become thirsty for water. Your trips to the toilet will get less after a few weeks as your bladder gets used to water. Guess what, you'll drink less alcohol, tea and coffee. I guarantee it; this water regime has worked for many hundreds of patients that visit us and it can work for you too.

Want to lose weight? Have a good look at the following foods, and follow this eating plan for 3 months, then you can 'slacken off' a little. Your weight WILL come off, unless you have an underlying metabolic disorder such as an under-active thyroid.

**Rapid carbohydrate inducers of insulin
(100%, strictly avoid these foods)**

Puffed rice, puffed rice cakes, corn flakes, puffed wheat, millet, instant potato, white bread, maltose, glucose, malt, lactose, sucrose, many breakfast cereals (sugar), dried fruits, lollies, chocolate, honey, rice syrup, ice cream

(90 - 100%, carefully avoid these foods)

Whole wheat bread, oat bran, white rice, brown rice, muesli, shredded wheat, weetbix, breakfast cereals, most biscuits, banana, raisins, apricots, potatoes, kumara, yams, corn, ice cream, Corn chips, rye crisps

**Moderate carbohydrate inducers of insulin
(50 – 80%, eat these foods in moderation)**

All Bran cereals, spaghetti, pasta, pumpernickel bread, fruit juices (dilute with water), peas, pinto beans, kidney beans, baked beans, navy beans,

**Reduced carbohydrate insulin secretory foods
(30 – 50%, eat mostly these foods)**

Most fresh fruits and vegetables, barley, oat meal, whole grain 100% rye bread, apples, pears, peaches, lentils, black-eyed peas, chick peas, lima beans, yoghurt, unsweetened soups