

Glycemic Index - You need to know the high and low of it.

The glycemic index (GI) is a way of describing how a carbohydrate containing food affects blood glucose levels. When we eat carbohydrates, our body breaks this down to produce glucose. Our cells use this glucose as their main energy source. Just like a car needs fuel, our body needs carbohydrates to run.

The Role of Insulin

For glucose to move from the blood into the body's cells, it needs insulin - a hormone secreted from the pancreas. Insulin is stimulated whenever there is glucose in the blood however if there is insufficient insulin, glucose levels will rise. Over a long period of time, this may lead to diabetes. Insulin is not only involved in regulating blood glucose levels, it also plays a key role in determining whether our body burns fat or carbohydrates for energy. High levels of insulin means the body is forced to burn carbohydrate, rather than fat. Therefore, by controlling the rate of glucose being absorbed we will also control the amount of insulin secreted. This is where the glycemic index comes into play.

Low GI Foods (also see my GI Example article for examples)

Oats e.g. porridge or natural muesli Multi-grain bread Pasta Low-fat milk and yoghurt Most fruit Sweet corn Sweet potato Legumes

High GI Foods (also see my GI Example article for examples)

White bread Rice-based crackers White rice Wheat-based breakfast biscuits Glucose Jelly lollies White Potato

Carbohydrates are found in many of the foods we eat each day and are an important consideration for weight loss. Low GI foods are a great source of carbohydrates when trying to lose weight as the slow release of energy will help increase satiety levels.

It is important to remember that although low GI carbohydrates are a preferred choice, this does not mean you can eat as much as you like!

TRAIN WITH DESIRE, DESIRE TO BE BETTER TOMORROW THAN YOU ARE TODAY.



Connie