



## Low GI eating guide

GI category	GI ranking	Examples
Low GI	55 or lower	Most fruits and non-starchy vegetables, lentils, beans, minimally processed grains, pasta, dairy foods, nuts and seeds
Medium GI	56-69	White and sweet potatoes, corn brown rice, couscous, oats, breakfast cereals such as Special K and Weetabix
High GI	70 or higher	White bread, white flour, white rice, rice cakes, biscuits, bagels, cakes, doughnuts, croissants, most packaged breakfast cereal, French Fries

### Low glycemic index (GI) principles:

The glycemic index is a ranking of foods based on their immediate effect on blood sugar levels compared with the same amount of pure glucose.

Every time you eat carbohydrates, your blood sugar levels rise, and as a consequence your insulin levels rise. How high they rise, and how fast, depend on the food you eat.

What happens when your insulin levels rise high? More fat is being stored. Therefore, keeping insulin levels from over-spiking is a key element to a weight loss solution.

A serving of white rice has almost the same effect as eating pure glucose – a quick, high spike in blood sugar and insulin. The same serving of lentils, for example, has a slower, smaller effect.

Low GI foods cause you to feel full longer because these help keep blood sugar even.

Bread, rice, pasta, breakfast cereal, dairy foods, fruits and vegetables all deliver carbs. For providing calories, one carb is as good as the other. However, when it comes to weight loss and a healthy body, some carbs are better than others.

Picking “good” carbs can help you control your hunger, your weight and ward off a host of chronic conditions, from diabetes and heart disease to various cancers.

A low GI meal prevents an insulin spike, promotes satiety, and improves the rate of fat loss.

## Ways to reduce the GI of a meal

- **You can reduce the GI of a meal by adding protein.**

Protein slows stomach emptying and therefore carbohydrate digestion, producing a smaller blood sugar rise and lowering the GI.

Examples of carb/protein combinations include beans, lentils, peas and pasta (all of these contain both protein and carbs).

Eating chicken with rice also lowers the GI.

- **You can reduce the GI of a meal by adding soluble fibre.**

Soluble fibre is the “fleshy” part of fruit and vegetables. It can't be digested. However, it forms a “gel” and therefore provides bulk and more volume (which is filling). Soluble fibre increases the viscosity of food in the digestive tract and slows digestion. This, in turn, slows the absorption of sugar, starches and refined carbs into the blood, producing a lower blood sugar rise and lowering the GI.

Examples of sugar/soluble fibre combinations include beans, lentils, peas, oats, porridge, barley, sweetcorn and fruit (all of these contain both sugar and soluble fibre). Eating green, leafy vegetables (such as spinach or broccoli) with rice or potatoes lowers the GI too.

## Tips:

- Eat large amounts of non-starchy vegetables such as spinach, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, bell peppers, aubergine, courgettes, mushrooms and salad greens.
- Include beans, lentils and fruit such as apples, pears, peaches and berries.
- Eat grains in moderation and in the least processed state possible, such as whole-kernel bread, stoneground bread, steel-cut oats, brown rice, whole barley, millet and wheat berries.
- Eat a healthy type of protein, such as beans, lentils, quinoa, fish, turkey or skinless chicken at most meals.
- Limit white potatoes, white breads, white pasta and breakfast cereals.
- Avoid table sugar (white or brown). Use honey, pure stevia or xylitol to sweeten if necessary.
- Eliminate fruit juice and sweetened drinks.