



LOW GLYCEMIC INDEX DIETS

September 16th 2015

*'Man is the only animal that eats
when he is not hungry,
that drinks when he is not thirsty,
and talks when he has nothing to say'*
Mark Twain

According to its own name, a LOW GI diet is a diet that is based on the ingestion of low glycemic index foods. This diet is not so focused on the energetic content (fats), but on the food intake considering the type of carbohydrates they contain.

Bread, rice, pasta, dairy products, fruits and vegetables are foods that add more or less carbohydrates. All of them are equally valid when adding fats, but every carbohydrate affects us differently; some are better, some others are worse.

Choosing the foods with better carbohydrates, this is planning a low GI diet, could be a considerable element when trying to control our weight or reducing the risk of suffering from chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart illnesses or some types of cancer.

This index (GI) measures how much and how fast can a piece of food increase the level of blood sugar.

When we eat foods that are rich in carbohydrates, blood sugar levels increase progressively as its starch and sugar are digested and settled. The speed rate at which these foods are digested depends on the type of nutrients they are made of, the amount of fiber they have and the composition of the rest of food present at the stomach and guts at that moment.

All these aspects are taken into account through the food GI. This index is the relation between the absorption curve area derived from taking 50gr of pure glucose during a period of time and the curve obtained from taking this same amount of food on a survey.

How is it determined?

At TRAZA CONSULTORES laboratory the GI is determined under controlled conditions. This process consists of drawing at certain moments the blood of somebody who has taken pure glucose solutions at times and food at others. Although determining it is pretty complicated, interpreting it is really easy: high indexes mean fast absorption while low indexes mean slow absorption.

On the one hand, high GI food raises quickly blood sugar levels. On the other hand, low GI food increase blood sugar level more slowly.

Types of carbohydrates

There are three types of carbohydrates in food.

Simple carbohydrates or sugars: glucose, fructose (sugar present in fruit), dairy (sugar present in milk) among others. These promote a more or less quick sugar increase.

Complex carbohydrates: Starch is the most well-known example of complex carbohydrates. It is composed by a long chain in which the links are the preceding molecules (for starches, only glucose molecules). Some starches are digested very easily and promote a relatively quick raise of blood sugar, as in boiled potatoes. Some other starches present at wholegrain and legumes are digested more slowly, so the blood sugar raise takes more time.

Fiber: only a small amount of fiber is digested, depending on the bacterial flora, but it is even not supposed to be digested in our digestive tract. Fiber makes us feel full in a greater way without adding any fats and, when present, it helps decrease the GI of the food itself.

In practice

You will rather choose low GI foods than high ones. Medium GI foods should not worry you.

- Low GI foods (55 or less): most fruits and vegetables, legumes, whole grains, pasta, dairy products with low fats and nuts.
- Medium GI foods (56 to 69): boiled or baked potatoes, corn, white rice, couscous...
- High GI (70 or more): white bread, bread rolls, loaf bread (even if it is labeled as "natural"), most cookies, cakes, pastries, refined or sweetened breakfast cereal, honey, sugar...

For more specific information, please see lists below

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HIGH GI FOODS AND PRODUCTS

Corn Syrup	115	Beer*	110
Modified starch	100	Sugar	100
Sugar Syrup	100	Corn or rice syrup	100
Potatoe starch	95	Rice flour	95
Maltodextrin	95	Fries	95
Baked potatoes	95	White and gluten-free bread	90
Dehydrated potato	90	Celeriac (boiled)	85
Ready-cooked rice	85	Puffed rice	85
Parnship*	85	Corn flakes	85
Wheat flour	85	Kuzu	85
Rice milk	85	Sugar-free pop corns	85
Corn flour	85	Turnip (boiled)*	85
White bread	85	Burger white bread	85
Carrots (boiled)*	85	Mashed potatoes	80
Rice pudding with sugars or sweeteners	75	Wafers	75
Pumpkin	75	Doughnuts	75
Lasagna	75	Puffed amaranth	70
Rice	70	White sugar	70
Brown sugar	70	Bagels	70
Baguettes	70	Sponge cake	70
Brioche	70	Refined cereals with sugars or sweeteners	70
Chocolate bar with sugars or sweeteners	70	Kohlrabi	70
Croissant	70	Date palms	70
Cookies	70	Gnocchi	70
Molasses	70	Millet	70
Unleavened berad	70	Rice bread	70
Fried potatoes	70	Boiled potatoes	70
Mashed corn	70	Common wheat pasta	70
Banana (cooked)	70	Polenta	70
Common wheat raviolis	70	Risotto	70
Sodas (sweetened, carbonated, flavoured drinks)	70	Special K®	70
Tacos	70	Jam (with sugars or sweeteners)	65
Couscous, semolina	65	Quince jam (con azúcar)	65
Soya beans (boiled)	65	Chestnut flour	65
Musli (with honey or sugar)	65	Yam	65
Whole bread	65	Rye bread (30% rye)	65
Brown bread (with yeast)	65	Fruit loaf	65
Boiled potatoes (with skin)	65	Pineapple in syrup	65
Sugar beet (cooked)*	65	Fruit ice-cream (with sugars or sweeteners)	65
Rice noodles	65	Tamarind (sweet)	65
Raisins	65	Apricots in syrup, with sugars	60
Camargue rice	60	Long-grain rice	60
Chestnuts	60	Barley	60
Chocolate powder (with sugars or sweeteners)	60	Ice cream (with sugars or sweeteners)	60
Lasagna (durum wheat)	60	Mayonnaise (industrial, with sugar)	60
Melon*	60	Honey	60

Ovomaltine	60	Brioche bread	60
Pizza	60	Porridge	60
Raviolis (durum wheat)	60	Semolina (durum wheat)	60
Red rice	55	Spaghetti without sauce	55
Grape juice (no sweeteners)	55	Ketchup	55
Peach in syrup, sugars added	55	Mustard	55
Medlar	55	Nutella®	55
Fresh papaya	55	Flour, sugar and butter pastries	55
Sushi	55	Tagliatelles	55
Bulgur wheat (cooked)	55	Yuka	55
Cassava	55	Mango juice (no sugars added)	55

Medium GI foods and products

All Brain™	50	Basmati rice	50
Wholegrain rice	50	Sweet potatoes	50
Cookies (wholemeal flour, no sugars added)	50	Cranberries juice (no sugars added)	50
Pineapple juice (no sugars added)	50	Persimmon	50
Kiwi*	50	Fresh lychee	50
Macaroons (durum wheat)	50	Fresh mango	50
Musli (no sugars added)	50	Crab fingers	50
Quinoa bread (65% aprox. from quinoa)	50	Wholegrain pasta	50
Cereal energetic bar (no sugars added)	50	Mashed sunroot	50
Apple juice (no sugars added)	50	Cranberries	45
Wholegrain basmati rice	45	Canned green peas	45
Green bananas	45	Capellini	45
Rye (wholegrain; flour, braid)	45	Wholemeal cereals (no sugars added)	45
Coconut	45	Jam (no sugars added)	45
Wholemeal couscous or semolina	45	Spelt wheat bread	45
Spelt wheat bread or flour	45	Orange juice (no sugars added)	45
Musli Montignac	45	Wholegrain wheat toasted bread (no sugars added)	45
Fresh pineapple	45	Raw banana	45
Pumpernickel	45	Tomato sauce (with sugars)	45
Wholemeal bulgur bread (cooked)	45	Fresh grapes	45
Grapefruit juice (no sugars added)	45	Chicory (drink)	40
Wholegrain buckwheat	40	Oatmeal	40
Prunes	40	Oatmeal (uncooked)	40
Quince jam (no sugars added)	40	Spaghetti al dente (cooking time: 5')	40
Falafel	40	Emmer	40
Canned beans	40	Raw soya beans	40
Quinoa flour	40	Figs	40
Carrot juice (no sugars added)	40	Kamut	40
Lactose	40	Coconut milk	40
Peanut butter (no sugars added)	40	Unleavened bread	40
100% wholegrain bread with natural yeast	40	Pasta al dente from wholegrain wheat	40
Tahini	40	Pumpernickel Montignac	40
Sider	40	Fruit ice cream (no sugars added)	40

Low GI foods and products

Dry apricots	35	Amaranth	35
Raw celeriac	35	Wild rice	35
Fresh green peas	35	Fresh figs	35
Cassoulet (French dish with beans and meat)	35	Cherimoya	35
Fresh plums	35	Applesauce (no sugars added)	35
Falafel (chickpeas)	35	Azuki beans	35
Beans cannellini	35	Red beans	35
Canned chickpeas	35	Fresh pomegranate	35
Chickpea flour	35	Ice cream (with fructose)	35
Borlotti bean	35	Tomatoe juice	35
Black beans	35	Yeast	35
Brewer's yeast	35	Sesame	35
Fresh apple	35	Dried apple	35
Fresh peach	35	Fresh quince	35
Mustard	35	Fresh orange	35
Fresh nectarine	35	Sunflower seeds	35
Mashed almonds (no sugars added)	35	Quinoa	35
Tomato sauce (no sugars added)	35	Noodles (durum wheat)	35
Dried tomatoes	35	Fiber Wasa™ (24% fiber)	35
Soya yogurt	35	Yogurt**	35
Montignac wholegrain bred	35	Garlic	35
Fresh apricots	35	Passion fruit	35
Chickpeas	35	Beans	35
Almond milk	35	Raw oatmeal milk	35
Soya milk	35	Milk powder	35
Milk** (skimmed or not)	35	Lentils	35
Yellow lentils	35	Clementines	35
Jam (no sugars added)	35	Turnip	35
Fresh pears	30	Quark**	35
Raw sugar beet	30	Soya noodles	30
Tomatoes	30	Grapefruit	30
Raw carrots	30	Pearl barley	25
Cherries	25	Dark chocolate (>70% cocoa)	25
Fresh raspberry	25	Fresh strawberries	25
Redcurrant	25	Dried and sliced green peas	25
Soya flour	25	Hummus	25
White beans	25	Green lentils	25
Blueberries	25	Blackberries	25
Mashed almonds (no sugars added)	25	Mashed hazelnuts (no sugars added)	25
Mashed peanuts (no sugars added)	25	Pumpkin seeds	25
Gooseberry	25	Acerola	20
Artichokes	20	Aubergine	20
Cocoa powder (no sugars added)	20	Dark chocolate (>85% cocoa)	20
Soya cream	20	Montignac fructose	20
Ratatouille	20	Bamboo shoots	20

Tamari sauce	20	Soya yogurt (not flavoured)	20
Lemon juice (no sugars added)	20	Olives	15
Chards	20	Almonds	15
Lupine	15	Celery	15
Hazelnuts	15	Broccoli	15
Seed sprouts	15	Zucchini	15
Onion	15	Wheat germ	15
Shallots	15	Chili	15
Sauerkraut	15	Brussels sprouts	15
Cauliflower	15	Endives	15
Asparagus	15	Spinaches	15
Blackcurrant	15	Fennel	15
Mushrooms	15	Ginger	15
Lettuce	15	Peanuts	15
Nuts	15	Cashew nut	15
Pickles	15	Cucumber	15
Pesto	15	Red peppers	15
Pine nuts	15	Pistachio nuts	15
Leeks	15	Radish	15
Cabbage	15	Rhubarb	15
Bran	15	Soya	15
Tofu	15	Golden berries	15
Beans	15	Avocado	10
Log GI Montignac pasta (spaghetti)	10	Crustaceans	5
Spices (parsley, basil, oregano, cinnamon, vanilla, etc.)	5	Vinegar	5

***Despite being high GI products, these foods have a really low pure glucose content (5 % approximately). Consuming them should have no effect on the blood glucose level.**

****There is almost no difference between skimmed or whole dairy products. However, despite being low GI, they have a high insulin index (and therefore act as high GI products).**

*****These products do not contain glucose and, therefore, no GI.**