

Glycemic Index (GI) Guidelines for a Plant-based Diet

**Plan meals that result in
a small blood sugar rise by choosing a low GI diet**

A low GI diet is especially important for those: overweight, insulin resistant, diabetic, or prone to low blood sugar (hypoglycemia)

To have a low GI diet:

- 1) **Choose most of your food from the low GI column on the right side of the table below.**
- 2) **Choose food occasionally from the intermediate GI column in the middle of the table.**
- 3) **Choose foods infrequently from the high GI column on the left side of the table.**
- 4) **Replace high GI foods with low GI foods.**
- 5) **If you include a high glycemic food in the meal (white potatoes, for example):**
 - a) **eat a smaller portion of the high glycemic food**



- b) add lower GI choices to balance the meal (beans, steamed broccoli with lemon juice, raw salad, nuts and/or seeds)
- 6) Include an acid food with the meal, such as fruit, lemon juice, or tomatoes. Acids in food slow down stomach emptying, slowing the rate of carbohydrate digestion, and, thus, the rate glucose (sugar) enters your bloodstream.
- 7) Use cornstarch to thicken foods rather than flour, which is high glycemic.

Please read----

Two additional important considerations:

- 1) Some low GI foods (bananas, grapes, mangos, unsweetened fruit juice, pastas) or intermediate GI foods (pineapple, cantaloupe, raisins) may NOT be low glycemic *for you*. Experiment to see what your personal blood sugar response to these foods is after you eat them.
- 2) A GI value was never meant as the only criterion for healthy food. Large amounts of fat (and protein) in food tend to slow the rate of stomach emptying. High-fat foods will, therefore, tend to have lower GI values than low-fat equivalents. For example, potato chips have a lower GI



value (54) than potatoes baked without fat (85). Many cookies have a lower GI value (55-65) than bread (70). Thus, a lower GI value doesn't always mean a healthier choice. The saturated, trans, and/or esterified fat in these foods will have adverse effects on coronary artery health greater than the benefit of lower blood sugar levels. These types of foods are best eaten infrequently.

Key: -the number in parentheses after the food is the GI value for that food
 -"av" after the number indicates that the number in parentheses is an average GI value of 2 or more different tests
 -[0] indicates that the food has little or no carbohydrate

<i>Type of food</i>	High glycemic index foods (≥ 70); generally a problem	Intermediate glycemic index foods (56-69); could be a problem	Low glycemic index foods (≤ 55); generally helpful
<i>Fruit, fresh & dried</i>	Watermelon (76) Honeydew melon has not been	Apricots (57) Breadfruit (68)	Northern fruits, raw (fresh) or frozen without sugar:



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	<p>tested, but is probably high glycemic</p>	<p>Cantaloupe (67) Cherries, dark (63) Papaya (56) Pineapple (59) Dried fruit: - cranberries, sweetened (64) - figs (61) - raisins (64) - sultanas (56)</p>	<p>- apples (38) - blueberries (53) - cherries (22) - grapes (53) - peaches (42) - pears (38) - plums (39) - raspberries [0] - strawberries (40) Dried fruit: - apples (29) - apricots (30) - dates (42 av) - prunes (29) Citrus fruits: - grapefruit (25) - lemon [0] - lime [0] - oranges (42) Avocado [0] Bananas - ripe (52) - slightly under ripe (42) - under ripe (30) Custard apple (54) Kiwi fruit (53) Mango (51) Plantain (green banana) (38)</p>



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			Rhubarb [0] Nectarines have not been tested, but are probably low glycemic
<i>Fruit juices & sports drink</i>	Gatorade (78)	Pomegranate juice, unsweetened (67)	Apple juice, unsweetened (40) Carrot juice, freshly made (43) Cranberry juice cocktail (52) Grapefruit juice, unsweetened (48) Orange juice, unsweetened (53) Pineapple juice, unsweetened (46) Prune juice, unsweetened (43) Tomato juice, unsweetened (38)
<i>Vegetables, <u>above ground</u></i>	Pumpkin (75)		Arugula [0] Asparagus [0] Bean sprouts [0] Bok choy, raw [0] Broccoli, raw [0] Brussel sprouts [0] Cabbage, raw [0] Cauliflower [0] Celery [0] Chili peppers [0] Chives [0] Corn, sweet (47 av) Cucumber [0] Eggplant [0] Endive [0] Fennel [0]



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			Green beans [0] Herbs, fresh or dried [0] Leafy greens, raw [0] Lettuce [0] Mushrooms [0] Okra [0] Peas, green (48) Peppers [0] Snow pea sprouts [0] Spinach [0] Squash, yellow [0] Swiss chard [0] Tomato [0] Watercress [0] Zucchini [0]
<i>Vegetables, <u>below ground</u></i>	Parsnips (97) Potatoes (white) - baked, Russet (77) - boiled (72) - French fries (75) - mashed, instant (88) - microwave (79) Rutabaga (“Swedes”) (72) Tapioca from cassava root (70)	Beets (64) Potatoes, new (65)	Artichoke, Jerusalem (sunchoke) [0] Carrots, raw (16) - cooked (41) Cassava (46) Garlic [0] Ginger [0] Leeks [0] Onions [0] Radishes [0] Scallion/green onion [0] Shallots [0] Sweet potato (46)



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			Taro (54) Turnip [0] Yam (37)
<i>Beans, dried & bean products</i>	Broad beans (Fava beans) (79)		Black beans (30) Black-eyed peas (42) Butter beans (31) Cannellini beans, canned (31) Channa dal (Bengal gram dal) (11) Chickpeas (garbanzos), dried, boiled (28) Chickpeas, canned (40) Hummus (6) Kidney beans, dried, boiled (28) Kidney beans, soaked overnight, boiled (51) Kidney beans, canned (36) Lentils -brown (30) - green (30) - red (26) Lima beans, baby, frozen (32) Marrow peas (39 av) Mung beans (39) Navy beans (33) Peas, whole, dried (22) Pigeon peas (22) Pinto beans (42 av)



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			Romano beans (46) Soy beans (18) Split peas, yellow (32) White beans (33) Tofu has not been tested, but is probably low glycemic
<i>Cooked cereals/grains</i>	Amaranth (97) Cream of Wheat (70) Maize meal porridge (85 av) Millet (71) Millet flour porridge (107) Oat flour porridge (74) Oatmeal, instant (82) Rice - instant (87) - jasmine, white (109) - white, glutinous (98) Cream of rice has not been tested, but is probably high glycemic	Barley porridge made from barley flour or dehulled flakes (63 av) Barley, rolled (66) Cornmeal (69 av) Couscous (65) Oatmeal, old-fashioned (traditional) (58) Polenta (68) Rice - arborio risotto, white (69) - basmati (58) - brown (66) - white (67 av) - long grain, quick cooking (65 av) - parboiled, low-amylose (69 av) - wild rice (57)	Barley - pearled (25 av) - cracked (50) Buckwheat groats (54) Cracked wheat (bulgur) (48) Oat bran, raw (55) Oatmeal, steel-cut oats (52) Quinoa (51) Red River Cereal (49) Rice - parboiled (47 av) - parboiled, high-amylose (35 av) - Uncle Ben's Converted, white (38) - Uncle Ben's Converted, white, long grain (50) Rice bran (19) Rye berries (whole kernel) (34) Semolina wheat (55) Whole wheat berries (whole kernel) (41)



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<i>Cold breakfast cereals</i>	Bran Flakes, Kellogg's (74) Cheerios (74) Coco Pops, Kellogg's (77) Corn Bran (75) Corn Chex (83) Corn Flakes, Kellogg's (77) Corn Flakes, high fiber (74) Corn Flakes, Crunchy Nut (72) Corn Pops, Kellogg's (80) Crispix (87) Golden Grahams (71) Grapenuts (71 av) Grapenuts Flakes (80) Honey Puffed Rice (77) Honey Smacks, Kellogg's (71) Puffed Rice (80) Puffed Wheat (80) Raisin Bran, Kellogg's (73) Rice Chex (89) Rice Krispies, Kellogg's (82) Shredded Wheat (75) Team (82) Total (76) Wheat biscuits, plain, flaked (70 av)	Bran Buds (58) Bran Chex (58) Froot Loops, Kellogg's (69) Life (66) Mini Wheats (58) Muesli, Swiss formula (56) Nutri-Grain, Kellogg's (66) Puffed buckwheat (65) Special K, Kellogg's (56) Weet-bix (69)	All Bran, Kellogg's (34) All Bran Fruit 'n Oats (39) All Bran Soy 'n Fiber (33) Bran Buds with psyllium, Kellogg's (47) Muesli, natural (40) Muesli, toasted (43)
<i>Other breakfast items</i>	Pop Tarts (70) Waffles (76)	Pancakes (67)	



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<i>Breads, rolls</i>	Bagel, white (72) Baguette, white (95) Bread stuffing (74) Dinner roll, white (73) English muffin bread (Natural Ovens, USA) (77) Gluten-free breads -multigrain (79) -white flour (76 av) -fiber-enriched (73) Kaiser roll (73) Melba toast (70) Rice bread-low amylose (72) Rye bread - black (76) - dark (86) Stay Trim Whole Grain Bread (Natural Ovens, USA) (70) White flour bread (71) Whole wheat flour bread (71) Whole wheat snackbread (Ryvita) (74) Wonder white bread (80)	Barley flour bread, 100% (67) Healthy Choice Hearty 100% Whole Grain Bread (62) Nutty Natural Whole Grain Bread (Natural Ovens, USA) (59) Oat bread: 80% intact oat kernels (65) Pita bread, white (57) Raisin bread (63) Rice bread: high amylose (61) Rye bread, light (68) Sunflower and barley bread (57) White bread, high-fiber (68 av) Whole grain rye flour bread (58 av) Whole wheat bread, 100% stoneground (59)	100% Whole Grain Bread (Natural Ovens, USA) (51) 9 Grain multigrain bread (43) Barley kernel bread -75-80% intact kernels (34 av) -50% kernels (46 av) Buckwheat bread: - 50% dehulled buckwheat groats, 50% white flour (47) Flaxseed and soy bread (55) Healthy Choice Hearty 7 Grain Bread (55) Muesli bread (54) Oat bran and honey (45) Oat bran bread: 45-50% oat bran (47 av) Pumpernickel (50) Rye bread, seeded (51) Sourdough rye (48) Sourdough wheat (54) Spelt multigrain bread (54) White bread with 80% intact wheat kernels (52) White bread made with 50-75 % cracked wheat (53 av)



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<i>Other sweet baked goods</i>	Cupcake with strawberry icing (73) Doughnut, cake type (76) Scones (92)	Angel food cake (67) Croissant (67) Crumpet (69) Pastry (59)	
<i>Flat breads, crackers, rice cakes, taco shells</i>	Amaranth/white flour flatbread (71) Arepa (77 av) Flatbread, white flour (73 av) Graham crackers (77) Kavli crispbread (71) Lebanese bread, white (75) Melba toast (70) Middle Eastern flatbread (97) Puffed crispbread (81) Rice cakes (82) Rice crackers (91) Soda crackers (74) Water crackers (71 av)	Chapatti made from maize flour (59) Pita bread, white or whole wheat (57) Rye crispbread, (Ryvita) (64 av) Stoned Wheat Thins (67) Taco shells, cornmeal-based, baked (68) Tortillas, whole wheat (59) Wheat crackers (67)	Chapatti, baisen (India) (27) Corn tortilla, Mexican (52)
<i>Chips, pretzels, popcorn</i>	Popcorn (72) Pretzels (83)		Corn chips (42) Potato chips (54) Pretzels, soy, NutriSystem (32)
<i>Pasta & noodles</i>	Corn pasta (78) Gluten-free rice and corn pasta (76) Rice pasta, brown (92)	Instant noodles (67) Spaghetti, white boiled 20 min (61 av) Udon noodles (62) Vermicelli, rice (58)	Capellini (45) Fettuccine, egg noodles (40) Linguine -thick (46) - thin (52) Macaroni (47)



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			Mung bean noodles (33) Soba noodles (46) Spaghetti - white, boiled 5 min (38 av) - white, boiled 10-15 min (44 av) - protein-enriched, cooked (27) - white, durum wheat (44) - whole wheat (42) Spirali, white, durum wheat (43) Star Pastina, white (38) Split pea/soy pasta shells (29) Vermicelli, white, durum wheat (35)
<i>Nuts, seeds, and fat-rich plant foods</i>	Too much of any of these foods at a given meal can be a problem because research shows that high levels of fat in the blood make it difficult for diabetics to lower their blood sugar		Almonds [0] Avocado [0] Brazil nuts [0] Cashew nuts (22) Hazelnuts [0] Macadamia [0] Peanuts (14) Pecans (10) Sesame Seeds [0] Walnuts [0] Olives, pistachios, sunflower seeds, flaxseeds have not been



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<i>Dairy alternatives</i>	Tofu-based frozen dessert (115) Rice milk (92)		Soy milk (40 av) Soy banana smoothie, low-fat (30) Soy yogurt, fruited (50)
<i>Spreads and sweeteners</i>		Golden syrup (63) Honey, commercial-blend (64) Maple flavored syrup (68)	Agave nectar, Sweet Cactus Farms (19) Avocado [0] Fructose, pure (19) Honey, 100% pure floral (35) Hummus (6) Jam, apricot, 100% fruit (50) Jam, blackberry, 100% fruit (46) Jam, raspberry, 100% fruit (46) Jam, strawberry, 100% fruit (46) Marmalade, orange (55)

References

- 1) Foster-Powell K, Holt SHA, Brand-Miller JC. *International table of glycemic index and glycemic load values: 2002*. Am J Clin Nut 2002;76:5-56.
- 2) Brand-Miller J, Wolever TMS, Foster-Powell K, Colagiuri S. *The New Glucose Revolution*, 3rd Ed. New York, NY: Marlowe & Company, 2007.
- 3) Brand-Miller J, Foster-Powell K. *The New Glucose Revolution: Shopper's Guide to GI Values 2007*. New York, NY: Marlowe & Company, 2007.

