

glycemic index

Glycemic Index (GI) is the scientifically proven way of describing how the carbohydrates in foods affect our blood glucose levels.

High GI foods are those in which carbohydrates break down quickly during digestion, releasing glucose rapidly into the bloodstream.

Low GI foods are those in which carbohydrates break down slowly, releasing glucose into the bloodstream gradually.

Low GI foods:

- ◆ Result in lower insulin levels which makes fat easier to burn and less likely to be stored;
- ◆ Help to lower blood fats;
- ◆ Are more filling and satisfying thereby reducing appetite;
- ◆ Reduce the risk of developing diabetes and heart disease;
- ◆ Help people with diabetes manage their blood glucose levels; and
- ◆ Help to sustain endurance exercise for longer.

Changing to a low GI diet is not difficult. You don't need to cut out any foods or food groups, just make better, more informed choices. This often means simply swapping one food for another, as shown in the table below.

High GI Food	Low GI Alternative
Bread - white or wholemeal	Bread containing lots of grains such as Burgen™ or 9-grain Multigrain™.
Processed breakfast cereals	Unrefined cereals such as rolled oats or natural muesli or a low GI processed cereal like Guardian™ or AllBran™.
Plain biscuits or crackers	Biscuits made with dried fruit, oats and wholegrains, e.g. Snackright Fruit Slice™, Highland Oatmeal™ and Vita-Weat™.
Potato / Rice	Substitute potato with baby new potatoes, sweet potatoes and corn. Try longer grain rice varieties such as Basmati or Doongara, or try pearled barley or noodles instead.

For more information about Glycemic Index, get yourself a copy of *The New Glucose Revolution*. This book, written by the University of Sydney's Jennie Brand-Miller, explains everything you need to know about GI and why it is so important for lifelong health and well-being. There are several books available in the New Glucose Revolution series, which can be purchased from all good bookshops or online at www.glycemicindex.com.

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