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## The Glycemic Index

The Glycemic Index (GI) was introduced in the 1980's as a way of measuring a carbohydrate's effect on blood sugar. Specifically, high glycemic foods trigger a large spike in blood sugar levels. This, in turn, causes the body to release insulin to remove the excess sugar. The problem is that large amounts of insulin can prevent your body from burning fat, and cause more of your food to be stored as body fat. To avoid this problem, you should primarily consume low glycemic foods (however, before, during and after exercise, high glycemic foods are better because they quickly replenish the body's fuel stores). Low glycemic foods provide a variety of health benefits including:

- ▶ Reduced weight and cholesterol levels.
- ▶ Improved sensitivity to insulin levels and diabetes control.
- ▶ Reduced levels of hunger and longer periods of satiety.

Use the table below to identify the glycemic index of a variety of common foods. The foods are rated in comparison to glucose, which is given a rating of 100. The lower the number, the slower the carbohydrate (i.e., low increase in blood sugar, low release of insulin). The higher the number, the faster the carbohydrate (i.e., high increase in blood sugar, high release of insulin). You can use the following scale to evaluate foods:

- ▶ 70 - 100 = High GI
- ▶ 40 - 69 = Medium GI
- ▶ Less than 40 = Low GI



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## Glycemic Index for Common Foods (Glucose = 100)

<b>High GI (&gt;70)</b>	<b>Medium GI (40-69)</b>	<b>Low GI (&lt;40)</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">                     Bagel, plain                      Bread, French                      Bread, white                      Corn Chips                      Cornflakes                      Corn Pops                      Doughnuts                      Dates                      Fruit Loops                      Gatorade                      Golden Grahams                      Graham Crackers                      Grapenuts                      Jelly Beans                      Popcorn                      Potatoes, baked                      Potatoes, French fried                      Potatoes, instant                      Pretzels                      Pumpkin                      Rice, instant                      Rice, white                      Rice Cakes                      Rice Crispies                      Shredded Wheat                      Tapioca                      Waffles                      Watermelon                 </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">                     Apricot                      Banana                      Beans, baked                      Beans, pinto                      Bread, rye                      Bread, wheat                      Cantaloupe                      Carrots                      Corn, sweet                      Cranberry Juice                      Grapes                      Honey                      Kiwi                      Grapefruit Juice                      Macaroni                      Macaroni &amp; Cheese                      Mango                      Oatmeal                      Oatmeal Cookies                      Orange                      Orange Juice                      Peas, green                      Pineapple                      Potatoes, sweet                      Power Bar                      Raisins                      Raisin Bran                      Rice, brown                      Shredded Wheat                      Spaghetti                      Special K                 </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">                     Apple                      Apple Juice                      Artichoke                      Asparagus                      Broccoli                      Cabbage                      Cauliflower                      Celery                      Beans, green                      Beans, kidney                      Beans, lima                      Cherries                      Grapefruit                      Lentils                      Beans, lima                      Beans, navy                      Milk                      Milk, chocolate                      Peach                      Peanuts                      Pear                      Plum                      Spaghetti, whole wheat                      Spinach                      Strawberry                      Tomatoes                      Tomato Juice                      Turnip                      Yams                      Yogurt, low-fat                      Zucchini                 </p>