

The Glycemic Index

Low GI, High GI, what's good and what's bad and what does all mean anyway. It seems that this is the new advertising buzz term because no matter where you turn you will find a product touting something about the Glycemic Index.

The glycemic index is a measure of a foods propensity to raise blood sugar levels (glycogen). To simplify things further: Low GI is generally good (lower in sugar) and High GI is generally not so good (higher in sugar). High GI foods give a spike in blood sugar levels and give that instant boost of energy, however this boost doesn't last long and generally leaves us wanting more as we experience the 'come down' after the sugar hit. These highs and lows are obviously not conducive to proving the sustained release of energy we need to be productive throughout the day.

Low GI		High GI	
Eggs	Apple	Baked Beans	Rice
Turkey	Salmon	Honey	Raisins
Spinach	Tuna	Many Cereals	Corn Chips
Beef	Cheese	Chocolate	Croissants
Orange	Carrots	Noodles	Pancakes
Almonds	Avocado	Many Breads	Popcorn
Tofu	Cucumber	Sweet Potato	Cranberries
Mushrooms	Broccoli	Dates	Waffles
Lamb	Strawberries	Muffins	Doughnuts
Oatmeal	Kidney Beans	Potatoes	Sweet Potato

The list above is just the tip of the ocean when it comes to the Glycemic Index but it does give a good cross section of some of the foods that fit into each category. You may notice from the list above that most of the Low GI foods are natural products and that many of the High GI foods are man made. A very simple way to shop for Low GI foods is to stick to the perimeter of the supermarket. Next time you go shopping take note of the food on the perimeter of the shop (mostly fresh natural produce) and then have a look down the aisles (mostly long shelf life man made products).

Give the Low GI diet a go for a while; the first week or two might be hard as you crave for those sugar highs but after that you should find that your food intake provides a steady release of sustained energy throughout your day. Leading to a more productive and better you!

Chris Saliba is an ex Royal Australian Airforce, Physical Training Instructor who owns and operates Specialized Fitness Solutions, a Beerwah based personal training business that specialized in group and personal training. Phone: 1300 654 775

The information contained in this article is the authors' opinion and should be used as a guide only. If you plan to undertake an exercise program you should first consult your medical practitioner and fitness professional.