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The Glycemic Index: Choosing Healthy Carbs

Slow-release foods help keep blood sugar levels even because they are digested more slowly, thus preventing your body from producing too much insulin. They also provide lasting energy.

What foods are slow-release? One helpful tool is to use the glycemic index (GI) and the glycemic load, which show the impact on your blood sugar level for a given food. The glycemic index (GI) tells you how quickly a food turns into sugar in your system, and glycemic load, a newer term, looks at both the glycemic index and the amount of carbohydrate in a food, giving you a more accurate idea of how a food may effect your blood sugar level.

A study at Harvard University found that people whose diets are low in fiber and high in refined and high-GI (Glycemic Index) carbohydrates are more than twice as likely to develop type 2 diabetes, as are people who eat a fiber-rich diet with a low glycemic load.”

Reading the numbers

The numbers to pay attention to are the glycemic load numbers. The lower the number, the less that food will effect your blood sugar level.

- Under 10 is considered a low glycemic load
- 11 to 19 is medium
- 20 or above is considered a high glycemic load

Food	Glycemic Index	Serving size	Carbohydrate per serving (g)	Glycemic Load per serving
Dates, dried	103	2 oz.	40	42
Mashed potatoes	83	1 cup	31	26
Cornflakes	81	1 cup	26	21
Puffed rice cakes	78	3 cakes	21	17
Russet baked potato	76	1 medium	30	23
Doughnut	76	1 medium	23	17
Soda crackers	74	4 crackers	17	21
White bread	73	1 large slice	14	10
Watermelon	72	1 cup	11	8
Carrots	71	1 medium	8	6
Soda	68	12 oz. can	37	25
Table sugar (sucrose)	68	2 tsp.	10	7
Pancake	67	6" diameter	58	39
White rice (boiled)	64	1 cup	36	23
Brown rice (boiled)	55	1 cup	33	18
Spaghetti, white	44	1 cup	40	18



Food	Glycemic Index	Serving size	Carbohydrate per serving (g)	Glycemic Load per serving
Spaghetti, whole wheat	37	1 cup	37	14
Rye, pumpernickel bread	41	1 large slice	12	5
Oranges, raw	42	1 medium	11	5
Pears, raw	38	1 medium	11	4
Apples, raw	38	1 medium	15	6
Skim milk	32	8 fl. oz.	13	4
Lentils, dried (boiled)	29	1 cup	18	5
Kidney beans, dried (boiled)	28	1 cup	25	7
Pearled barley (boiled)	25	1 cup	42	11
Cashew nuts	22	1 oz.	9	2
Peanuts	14	1 oz.	6	1