

# HOW TO UTILIZE THE GLYCEMIC INDEX

The glycemic index (GI) is a system that gives carbohydrate-containing foods a number according to how much that specific food raises blood sugar. The purpose of the glycemic index is to eat carbohydrate-containing foods that are not going to cause a large spike in blood sugar levels. Paying attention to the glycemic index of foods can help with weight loss or maintain a healthy weight, and prevent chronic diseases related to obesity such as type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular disease.



High GI  
(70 and above)



Medium GI  
(55 to 69)



Low GI  
(54 or less)

**Limitations of GI Values:** GI values do not reflect the quantity you would eat of a particular food. This means it can make foods that are considered healthy and full of fiber look like they should be avoided simply because they have a high GI. GI values don't reflect the nutritional information of a particular food either. This means that even a low GI food might not be healthy for weight loss. For example whole milk has a GI value of 31 but this milk is high in fat content, so would not be a good choice for weight loss or maintaining a healthy weight. The list of GI foods doesn't include every single food in the world either, it just contains basic commonly consumed foods. The GI value of any food can also be affected by how the food is prepared, processed or eaten.



The authors received funding support for this work from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under award number P20GM103474 and award number 5P20GM104417. The content presented here is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health. For further information please contact the Montana State University Food and Health Lab: (406) 994-3289 or [foodandhealthlab@gmail.com](mailto:foodandhealthlab@gmail.com)



# SO WHAT CAN I EAT?

## Low Glycemic Index Foods:

Are numbered 1-55 on the GI scale.

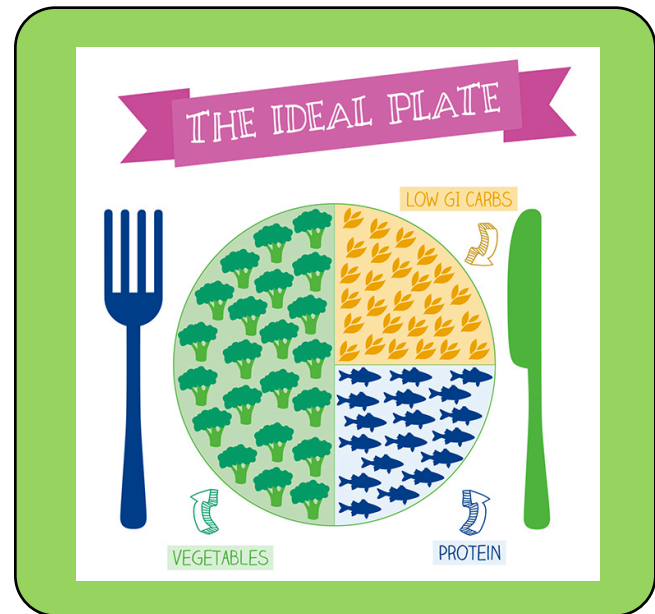
- 100% stone-ground whole wheat or pumpernickel bread
- Oatmeal (rolled or steel-cut), oat bran
- Barley
- Sweet potato, corn, yam
- Lima beans, kidney beans, peas, legumes, lentils
- Most fruit
- Raw carrots
- Non-starchy vegetables

**Medium Glycemic Index Foods:** Are numbered 56-69 on the GI scale.

- Whole wheat, rye, multigrain and pita bread
- Quick oats
- Brown, wild, or basmati rice
- Sweet corn
- Bananas, raw pineapple, raisins

**High Glycemic Index Foods:** Are numbered 70 or higher on GI scale.

- White rice, white bread, bagels
- Potatoes
- Corn flakes, puffed rice, bran flakes, instant oatmeal
- Short grain white rice, rice pasta, macaroni and cheese from mix
- Pumpkin
- Pretzels, rice cakes, popcorn, saltine crackers
- Melons



The authors received funding support for this work from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under award number P20GM103474 and award number 5P20GM104417. The content presented here is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health. For further information please contact the Montana State University Food and Health Lab: (406) 994-3289 or [foodandhealthlab@gmail.com](mailto:foodandhealthlab@gmail.com)





