

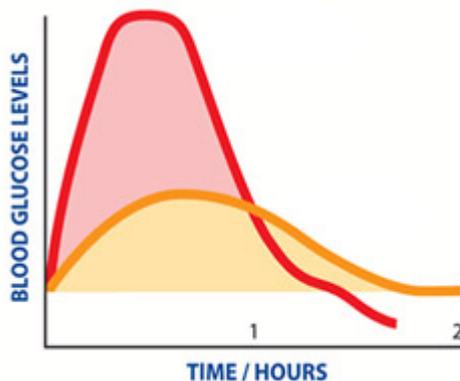


POSITION STATEMENT

WHY DON'T WE USE THE TERMS SIMPLE AND COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES ANYMORE?

Research on the glycemic index over the past 30+ years has shown us that using terms like “simple” or “complex” tells us nothing about how the carbohydrates in the foods and beverages we consume affect our blood glucose levels. And for people with diabetes who must manage their BGLs, that’s what matters.

For many years, the nature of carbohydrates was described by their chemical structure. They were either simple or complex and it was all about size. Sugars were simple and starches were complex. Why? Well sugars were small molecules and starches were big ones. From this, it was assumed that big starch carbohydrates would be slowly digested and absorbed and would therefore cause only a small and gradual rise in blood glucose levels. So they were called “complex” and this implied healthy. Smaller sugar carbohydrates were assumed to be digested and absorbed quickly, producing a rapid increase in blood glucose simply because they were small. So we called them “simple” and gave the impression that they were not so good for us.



Then along came [David Jenkins and Tom Wolever’s ground-breaking research](#) on the glycemic index. It challenged these assumptions with real science. The [glycemic index \(GI\)](#) and [glycemic load](#) concepts have been developed to characterize food behavior during human digestion. It showed us what actually happens in our bodies with real foods in real people and blood tests (something that had never been done before). It showed us that the rise in blood glucose after meals cannot be predicted on the basis of molecule size or chemical structure. In other words, the old distinctions between starchy foods (complex carbohydrates) and sugary foods (simple carbohydrates) had no useful application when it came to blood glucose levels – and all of the health issues that relate to them. The GI is the only way you can rank the glycemic potency of the carbohydrates in different foods exactly as they are eaten.



GLYCEMIC INDEX
making healthy choices easy

National Office
29 Arundel St, Glebe, NSW 2037, Australia
Tel +61 (0) 2 9552 9856
www.gisymbol.com
ABN 53 096 268 147

THE GLYCEMIC INDEX FOUNDATION:

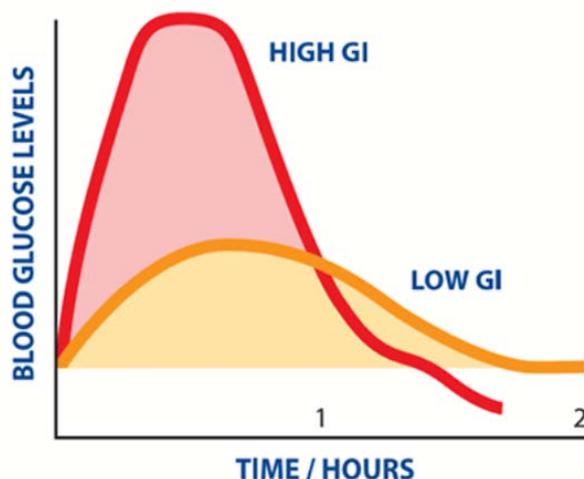
The Glycemic Index Foundation (GIF) is a not-for-profit organisation established in 2001 by the University of Sydney, Diabetes Australia and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

GIF administers the Glycemic Index (GI) Tested certification trademark, or 'GI Symbol Program'. Foods that carry the authentic GI symbol meet strict nutrient criteria for energy (kilojoules), saturated fat, and, where appropriate, dietary fibre, calcium and sodium. They have also had their glycemic index tested at an accredited laboratory.

Funds surplus to the GI Symbol Program are directed to community awareness and education about the health benefits of low GI carbohydrate choices, in research and development to make lower GI choices available in each food category and in ongoing scientific research to build knowledge and understanding of the health benefits of low GI carbohydrates.

WHAT IS GLYCEMIC INDEX?

The glycemic index (GI) is a ranking of carbohydrates in foods on a scale from 0 to 100 according to the extent to which they raise blood glucose levels. Foods with a high GI (70 or more) are those which cause our blood glucose levels to go higher for longer, which can damage vital tissues and organs if high blood glucose levels persist over a period of time.





GLYCEMIC INDEX
making healthy choices easy

National Office
29 Arundel St, Glebe, NSW 2037, Australia
Tel +61 (0) 2 9552 9856
www.gisymbol.com
ABN 53 096 268 147

Source: www.glycemicindex.com

Low GI foods (55 or less), by virtue of their slow digestion, absorption and/or metabolism, produce a less pronounced rise in blood glucose and insulin levels, and have proven benefits for health. Low GI diets have been shown to reduce blood glucose levels in people with diabetes (type 1 and type 2). They also have benefits for weight management.

Research has shown that Australians eat too many high GI carbohydrates and not enough low GI carbohydrates.

Glycemic Index Foundation recommends that added sugars only be consumed in moderation (i.e., less than 10% of energy) as recommended by the World Health Organisation and as part of a balanced diet and active lifestyle.

For further information, visit: www.glycemicindex.com or www.gisymbol.com