



**GLYCEMIC INDEX**  
making healthy choices easy

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## POSITION STATEMENT

### **LOW CARBOHYDRATES AND LOW GI ARE NOT THE SAME**

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People often confuse a low carbohydrate diet with a low GI diet. For optimum health, the evidence clearly indicates that lower GI foods and diets are not just good for glycemic control, but also linked to reduced risk of chronic disease. 'Lower Carbohydrate' does not mean 'Lower GI' (it could still be a high GI food) and may be confusing for people selecting foods and wanting to follow a low GI lifestyle. Low carbohydrate diets have little to offer – they may actually increase the risk of chronic disease. In practice, they are difficult to sustain over the long term because carbohydrates are part and parcel of our Western diet. In fact, there is strong evidence to suggest that moderate-carbohydrate low GI diets are better for your health and easier to sustain. The long term health effects of a low carbohydrate diet are unknown.

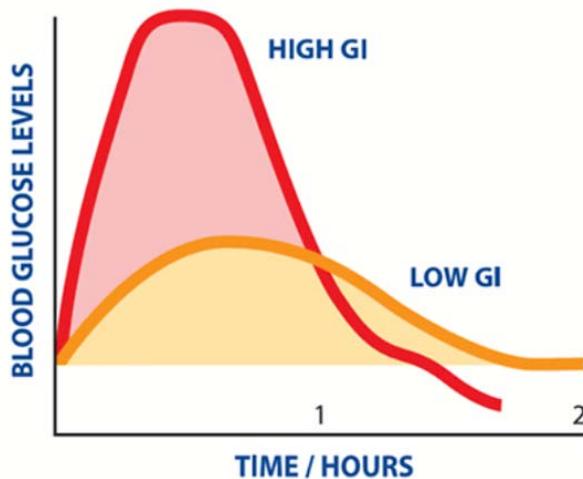
Low GI "diets" are more about the quality of the carbohydrate rather than the quantity. The GI is a measure of how quickly or slowly the carbohydrates in foods are broken down and absorbed into the blood stream and converted to glucose. Food labels that include both 'lower carbohydrate' and 'lower GI' may be confusing for the consumer. The Foundation's mission is to promote the health benefits of Glycemic Index. Food labelling is a critical path to market in providing clearer and informative guidance to people seeking and selecting better quality carbohydrate foods. The Foundation therefore supports clearer labelling of Lower GI rather than Lower Carbohydrate foods in the marketplace. Slow carb, *not* low carb.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

### 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, damaging vital tissues and organs.



Source: [www.glycemicindex.com](http://www.glycemicindex.com)

Low GI foods, 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.

Low GI is not a fad diet but a way of eating that is sustainable in the long term and is backed by over 30 years of scientific research. This includes level 1 scientific evidence that a low GI diet facilitates the management of diabetes, weight loss and weight loss maintenance and reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, diabetes complications and other chronic lifestyle diseases.

For further information, visit: [www.gisymbol.com](http://www.gisymbol.com) or [www.glycemicindex.com](http://www.glycemicindex.com)