

What is the Glycemic Index?

The glycemic index is a very useful chart as far as dieting goes. All carbohydrates are sugars, all of which are released into the bloodstream at different rates, the index measures how fast a particular food is likely to raise blood sugar.

This is of most importance, particularly for people diagnosed with diabetes. If for example your blood sugar were to drop then you would need to eat or drink some form of simple carbohydrate(sugar) to elevate your blood sugar as quickly as possible. Symptoms of these low levels would be dizziness, hunger, sweating, heart palpitations, shortness of breath and, in extreme low levels - unconsciousness (usually only seen in diabetics).

This problem, for the latter, would then be resolved by being hospitalised and hooked up to a glucose drip. Glad I'm not a diabetic. That's enough of the scary stuff. As long as you eat correctly to keep your blood sugar level (BSL) stable you will be fine and help to keep your bodyfat levels to a minimum.

What does blood sugar have to do with dieting you may ask? As mentioned in the carbohydrate article, insulin is a carrier hormone. The higher the food in the glycemic index chart, the more insulin your body will release. This in turn means that your body is more likely to store bodyfat. When you buy food don't just look for the fat content, look at the carbohydrates too. Low fat products usually contain fairly high carbohydrates, the majority of those being sugar. The sugars are usually added to help increase the flavour, etc as most of the fat has been taken out. So don't be fooled with low fat products as more than likely they will contain more sugars.

If you are looking to lose excess bodyfat or maintain existing levels of low bodyfat, just take a look at the glycemic index as to what foods are of the lowest value in terms of keeping insulin levels at bay. Remember, the higher the index, the more insulin released. Not only will this be harder for you to lose unwanted fat stores but it will play havoc with your energy levels. All you have to do is make sure that your carbohydrates have a low glycemic index and the results will speak for themselves.