

Food Trends

A Smart Way To Shape Up For Good

by Sherry Torkos, B.Sc. Phm

(NAPSA)—There's a new tool in the battle of the bulge—it's called the Glycemic Index (GI).

The index ranks all forms of carbohydrates on a scale of zero to 100 on how they affect blood sugar levels and consequently insulin levels. Foods that are broken down into sugar more slowly during digestion and do not cause sudden blood sugar spikes are ranked low on the GI.

Low-GI foods include green leafy vegetables; most beans, apples, pears and berries; oat bran and pumpernickel bread; brown rice and pasta; plain yogurt; and dark chocolate. Foods that are rapidly broken down, causing sudden blood sugar spikes, include refined white flour products; white rice; sugar-rich candy and soda pop; and most pastries and doughnuts.

Eating high-GI meals causes blood sugar to rise rapidly. When blood sugar and insulin levels are high, the body stores more fat. The pancreas overproduces insulin, causing blood sugar levels to drop. When blood sugar is low, people get more cravings. Continually eating high-GI foods can raise your risk for type 2 diabetes.

Low-GI foods break down more slowly so they promote more stable blood sugar and offer the body sustained energy. Whenever possible, choose low- or moderate-GI foods, avoid high-GI foods, engage in regular exercise and take smart supplements. Clinical studies have shown that a handful of natural supplements can improve glycemic control. They include:

- Phase 2, a standardized extract of the white bean, reduces the digestion of starches, lowers after-meal blood sugar levels and may assist in weight control. The



Foods that are low on the Glycemic Index break down more slowly and don't create spikes in blood sugar.

recommended dosage is 1,000 to 1,500 mg before starchy meals.

- Soluble fiber slows the rate of digestion, promotes more stable blood sugar levels and enhances the feeling of fullness. Look for fiber supplements that contain oats, psyllium or glucomannan. Take daily with lots of water.

- Cinnamon contains compounds that work with insulin to help reduce blood sugar levels. Add ½ tsp. to your cereal, yogurt or protein shake, or take in supplement form.

Keep in mind, supplements are intended to complement, not replace, a healthy lifestyle. Regular exercise and a healthful diet are essential for success. More information is available at www.phase2info.com.

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