

GI News—December 2007



In this issue of GI News

- A cuppa tea quells BGLs
- Update on cinnamon (cassia)
- Prof Trim checks out glucosamine
- How to boost that slow metabolism
- Eating to beat cancer

If cookbooks for family and friends are on your Christmas shopping list, check out our top 10. We've picked our favourites from books reviewed in *GI News* with great recipes that will look after your body as well as delight your tastebuds. Also this month Dr David shares the secret of getting kids active; our chef Kate Hemphill has come up with two easy entertaining recipes with a Mediterranean flavour; and our pick of the crop for food for the month just had to be juicy, chin-drippy mangoes – we couldn't resist. Enjoy this bumper issue for holiday reading.

Good eating, good health and good reading.

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AND LOOK AFTER THE WORLD

- Professor Mark Wahlquist AO MD FRACP

GI News Editor: Philippa Sandall

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Posted by GI Group at [8:28 AM](#) __

Food for Thought

You really can cut your cancer risk

Be as lean as you can within the normal range of body weight and be physically active for at least 30 minutes a day to reduce your risk of certain cancers are two key messages to come out of The World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) and the American Institute for Cancer Research report (November 2007).



Here, we have summarised their top tips for a healthy diet to reduce your risk of cancer. All we would add is opt for smart carbs for your meals and snacks to reduce the overall GI of your diet (see 'The lowdown on reducing the GI of your diet', *GI News*, November 2006), make sure you tuck into at least 2 serves of fruit and 5 of vegetables every day and get those good fats especially omega-3s by eating fish a couple of times a week and you'll reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes and its complications and heart disease as well. A bit like going for the trifecta.

- Base your meals on plant foods like vegetables, fruits, legumes and wholegrains such as brown rice and wholemeal pasta. (GI Group: Although all wholegrains are healthy, nutritious foods, it's only the low GI ones that reduce your blood glucose and insulin levels throughout the day and increase your sense of feeling full and satisfied because they are the ones that slowly trickle glucose into your bloodstream.)
- Opt for a colourful variety of vegetables and fruits every day. They are good sources of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals and are linked to a reduced risk of several cancers.
- Limit your consumption of red meats (such as beef, pork and lamb) to less than 500 g cooked weight (about 700–750 g raw weight) a week. Why? Although red meat is a valuable source of several nutrients and can be part of a healthy diet, it also has substances that have been shown to damage the lining of the bowel. In fact the evidence linking red meat intake to colorectal cancer is more convincing than it was a decade ago. If you eat the recommended amount, the cancer risk is minimal, but beyond that the risk increases.
- Don't bring home the bacon. Avoid processed meats such as bacon, ham, salami, corned beef and some sausages. Why? Well, processed meat is preserved by smoking, curing or salting or by the addition of preservatives. These methods of preserving meat can produce cancer-causing substances.
- Limit your consumption of salty foods and food processed with salt (sodium). Try to use herbs and spices to flavour your food and remember that processed food and breakfast cereals, can contain large amounts of salt.
- Avoid sugary drinks and limit your consumption of energy-dense foods (particularly processed foods high in added sugar, or low in fibre, or high in fat). Opt for water or unsweetened tea and coffee in place of sugary drinks.
- Watch what you drink. Convincing evidence links alcohol with a range of cancers, so if you want to reduce your risk, don't drink it. There's some evidence that small amounts of alcohol (1 standard drink a day) may have a protective effect on the heart, but the benefits

only outweigh the risk in those particularly at risk of heart disease – men over 40 and postmenopausal women.

The report was based on the largest and most comprehensive study of cancer and diet to date – nine teams of scientists reviewed 7,000 studies on diet, exercise and cancer over five years. Download the report [HERE](#).

Posted by GI Group at [8:26 AM](#) __

[News Briefs](#)

Cuppa tea anyone?

‘There is no trouble so great or grave that cannot be much diminished by a nice cup of tea’ so the saying goes. Now it looks like that very same cuppa may help quell blood glucose spikes. A one gram cup of black tea may have the potential to stimulate an insulin response and reduce blood glucose levels, report Judith Bryans and colleagues from King's College London and the University of Central Lancashire in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*. Their findings suggest that black tea could blunt blood glucose spikes, keeping the body's blood glucose levels relatively steady throughout the day. They recruited 16 healthy volunteers for a randomised, crossover study and assigned them 75 grams of glucose in either 250 ml of water (control), 250 ml of water plus 0.052 g of caffeine (positive control) or 250 ml of water plus 1.0 gram (1½ teaspoons) of instant black tea. For the first hour after drinking the beverages the glucose concentrations did not differ much at all among the volunteers. However, after two hours tea drinkers' glucose levels were significantly reduced compared with the controls. Tea drinking also showed elevated insulin concentrations at 1½ hours compared to the controls – the likely reason for the observed decrease in blood glucose levels. In a cautious conclusion the researchers point out that: ‘the physiological effects ... were relatively small and were achieved under test conditions. Under normal tea drinking conditions before or after food, the presence of other phenolic compounds could potentially alter, or even enhance, the effects seen in our study.’
– *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*, 26 (5), 2007



Veggie fibre does it

If you want to reduce your risk of diabetes, eat a low GI diet and tuck into your veggies (especially legumes) say University of Sydney researchers writing in the November edition of

Diabetes Care. The study which tracked more than 2,100 Australians over 10 years found that veggie fibre offers more protection against diabetes than fruit or cereal fibre reducing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 24%. Diets high in fruit or cereal fibre weren't nearly as beneficial. In a separate analysis of people aged less than 70 years, diets with a high GI increased their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 75%, compared with those eating a low GI diet.

Talking to *GI News*, the study leader, Alan Barclay, said: 'vegetables, and legumes in particular, were probably delivering the best results because they were an ideal source of intact or natural fibre. Legumes like beans, lentils and chickpeas and vegetables like sweet corn, carrots and peas are eaten whole with their dietary fibre intact, which means they actually encapsulate the carbohydrate in the food. They therefore slow down the rate of digestion and absorption and have good flow-on glycemic effects on blood glucose. Cereal fibre was not so effective because it is now often added to products, rather than eaten in a natural form. And while fresh fruit fibre is often eaten intact, people probably just did not get enough from the fruit they eat to show a benefit.'

– *Diabetes Care*, Vol 30, No 11, November 2007

TOTAL DIETARY FIBRE*

		Fibre (grams)
	Navy Bean	19.1
	Split Pea	16.3
	Lentil	15.6
	Pinto Bean	15.4
	Chickpea	12.5
	Bran Flakes	7.1
	Whole wheat spaghetti	6.3
	Whole wheat bread	3.8

*Amount in 1 cup cooked, except for Bran Flakes (1 cup dry) and whole wheat bread (2 slices)
Recommended daily value = 30 grams fibre/day

Source: Ontario Beans

What about fibre and GI?

Dietary fibre is not one chemical constituent like fat and protein. It is composed of many different sorts of molecules and can be divided into soluble and insoluble types. The effect of

fibre on a food's GI depends on the type of fibre. Soluble fibres are the gel, gum and often jelly-like components of foods like oats, legumes and apples. Soluble fibre can lower your body's glycemic response to a food by slowing down the time it takes for food to pass through the stomach and small intestine. Insoluble fibres are dry and bran-like and often referred to as roughage. All cereal grains and products made from them that retain the outer coat of the grain are sources of insoluble fibre. But not all foods containing insoluble fibre are low GI. Why? Insoluble fibres will only lower the GI of a food when they exist in their intact, original form, for example in whole grains of wheat. Here they act as a physical barrier, delaying access of digestive enzymes and water to the starch within the cereal grain.

Why do some high fibre foods have a low GI and not others?

Many processed grain foods that are rich in fibre such as wholemeal bread have a high GI. Why? It all comes down to the physical state of the fibre and the starch in the food. When wheat fibre has been finely divided as it is in wholemeal bread or breakfast cereals, it does little for either constipation or blood glucose levels. That's why we say to choose your carbs carefully, and if your favourite wholegrain food has a high or moderate GI, combine it with a low GI food to reduce the glycemic load of your meal or snack.



The jury's still out on cinnamon

Lab research has suggested that cinnamon (*Cinnamomum cassia*) may make body cells more sensitive to insulin. Some small studies have also shown that cassia cinnamon can reduce the blood glucose rise after eating. But it's too soon to recommend people with diabetes tuck into this spice and think it will steady their blood glucose levels naturally, according to researchers from University of Oklahoma in September *Diabetes Care*. In this latest study, 43 adults with type 2 diabetes were randomly given either cinnamon capsules or a placebo every day for three months. The cinnamon group took two capsules a day, each of which contained 500 milligrams of the spice. The placebo group took capsules containing wheat flour. In the end, there were no significant differences in glucose, cholesterol, A1C or insulin levels according to the researchers led by Dr Steve M. Blevins.

The reason for the conflicting findings from this and earlier studies may have to do with differences in the study groups according to Blevins and his colleagues. Most of the volunteers in the current study, for example, were on various diabetes drugs; in Khan's 2003 study that found cinnamon reduced blood glucose levels, none of the participants were on any of these drugs. The researchers conclude that we need more studies to see whether factors such as diet, ethnicity, BMI, glucose levels, cinnamon dose and concurrent medication might affect cinnamon

responsiveness. 'Until then,' they conclude, 'cinnamon cannot be generally recommended for treatment of type 2 diabetes in an American population.'

– *Diabetes Care* 30:2236-2237, 2007



Posted by GI Group at [8:24 AM](#) _

[Food of the Month](#)

Mangoes

Mouthwatering mangoes may be difficult to peel and messy to eat, but the effort's worth it – they are one of the few tropical fruits with a low GI (51) so they'll deliver sustained energy without spiking those blood glucose levels (in modest portions). That's not all. They are also an excellent source of vitamin C, high in the soluble fibre pectin that helps in controlling blood cholesterol, a good source of vitamin E, rich in beta-carotene which the body converts to vitamin A, and loaded with compounds called polyphenols which have strong antioxidant properties protecting against heart disease and cancer. So you really don't need an excuse to grab one.

Some mango lovers suggest that the best way to eat them is in the shower! But there are easier ways to enjoy a mango without the chin drips and messy hands. Simply slice the unpeeled mango lengthways down each side of the stone with a sharp paring knife. Score the fleshy cheeks into cubes in a criss-cross or diamond pattern (don't cut through the skin), flip inside out, slice the dice into a dish and go for it.

Dried mango and mango juice have many of the nutritional benefits of fresh, but you are entering 'a very little goes a long way' territory here as they are substantially more energy dense. Keep these for occasional foods. A serving is 1 cheek fresh mango; ½ cup (125 ml) mango juice (no added sugar) or 30 g dried mango.



Posted by GI Group at [8:22 AM](#) _

Low GI Recipes of the Month

Our chef Kate Hemphill develops deliciously simple recipes for *GI News* that showcase seasonal ingredients and make it easy for you to cook healthy, low GI meals and snacks. For more of Kate's fabulous fare, check out: www.lovetocook.co.uk. For now, prepare and share good food with family and friends – we have chosen recipes that will serve six this month with the holiday season fast approaching.



Kate Hemphill

Pomegranate and parsnip chicken tagine

I find it hard to go past a lamb shank tagine, however that requires much longer cooking time. This one can be assembled, cooked and on the table within an hour of getting home. It also keeps well, and the leftovers are delicious next day. The sweet parsnips and tart pomegranate seeds complement the dish wonderfully. To remove pomegranate seeds, cut in half then pry seeds out in a bowl of water, then drain. This will stop the juice from flying everywhere! I use Herbies tagine blend. You can buy it online at www.herbies.com.au. When pomegranates are out of season, use 1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses for a similar flavour.

Serves 6



2 tablespoons tagine spice blend
6 skinless chicken thighs
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 small-medium parsnips peeled and diced (2.5 cm/1 inch)
1 long red chilli, sliced
1 large red onion (cut into 8 wedges)
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 pomegranate, seeds removed and set aside
400 g (14 oz) can chopped tomatoes
1 tablespoon tomato paste

To serve

Handful coriander leaves
Cous cous (made with 1½ cups/150 g instant cous cous)
Green salad tossed with vinaigrette dressing

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the tagine spice blend over the chicken pieces to coat and press into the flesh.
- Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a flameproof casserole dish on top of the stove and sauté the parsnips, chilli, onion and garlic (about 5 minutes). Add the remaining tablespoon of the tagine spice blend, three-quarters of the pomegranate seeds, the tinned tomatoes and the tomato paste – bring to the boil then reduce the heat and simmer gently for a further 5 minutes.
- Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a non-stick frying pan and gently brown the chicken pieces on all sides (about 10 minutes).
- Add the chicken pieces (but not the fat left in the pan) to the tagine plus a little water if necessary to make sure the chicken is mostly covered. Cover with a tight lid and cook in the oven for 30–40 minutes, or until the chicken pieces are cooked through. Just before the end of cooking time, prepare the cous cous following the packet instructions.
- Serve the tagine topped with the remaining pomegranate seeds and coriander leaves with cous cous and a crispy green salad.

Nutritional analysis per serving without accompaniments

1464 kJ/348 calories; 27 g protein; 19 g fat (includes 4.5 g saturated fat); 16 g carbohydrate; 4 g fibre

Lebanese Lamb Skewers

This marinade caramelises really nicely on the grill. You could also use the marinade on duck, or

any cut of lamb. If you use wooden skewers, soak them in cold water for 2–3 hours to prevent them from burning when cooking under the grill or on the barbecue. You can buy baharat which is a Lebanese spice blend from Middle Eastern stores or online from www.herbies.com.au

Makes 12 skewers



1 kg (2.2 lb) lean lamb leg meat, cut into large cubes (you need 36 pieces of meat 2.5 cm/1 inch)
Makes 12 skewers

Marinade

3 tablespoons red wine
1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses
1 teaspoon baharat

- Combine the diced lamb with the marinade ingredients in a bowl and mix thoroughly. Cover and leave to marinate for at least 2 hours in the fridge.
- Heat a grill, barbecue or griddle pan to medium-high. Thread 3 pieces of lamb on each skewer and cook for 2 minutes on each of the 4 sides, then rest for 5 minutes before serving. The lamb should be pink and tender, but you can adjust cooking time for personal preference.

Serve with baba ganoush, tabouli and fennel seed flatbread. There are recipes for these on www.lovetocook.co.uk if you don't have your own.

Nutritional analysis per kebab (without accompaniments)
937 kJ/223 calories; 28 g protein; 11 g fat (includes 5.8 g saturated fat); 1.6 g carbohydrate

Posted by GI Group at [8:20 AM](#) _

[Good for You, Good for the Planet: Sue's Radd's Green Kitchen](#)

3 ways to eat green at Christmas

Christmas is supposed to be the time for peace on earth and goodwill to men. Yet our frequently extravagant food expectations can result in the least eco-friendly meal of the year. Here are some tips to help you have fun but leave a softer ecological footprint so Santa continues to have a home in the North Pole – at least, for now.



Sue Radd

- Buy local, seasonal and organic produce to create your Christmas dinner. You may need to tweak your menu, but you will benefit by picking up fresher ingredients from urban gardens or Farmers Markets. You could also save mother earth the polluting effects of 49 000 food miles, the estimated distance Christmas food ingredients can travel to reach the dinner plate, according to the Soil Association in the UK.
- Feature more veggies and less meat on the menu. It takes 500 litres of water to produce 1 kg of potatoes but up to 100 000 litres to make 1 kg of beef! Vegetables also don't burp like livestock, which contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions by producing methane.
- Waste not, want not. Plan your dinner requirements carefully and only buy what you need. Researchers from Australia estimate that a quarter of food purchased usually ends up in landfill. This is never more true than at Christmas time! It means a lot of 'embodied energy' – the fuel and water used in growing, harvesting, transporting and storing foodstuffs – is wasted. If you have leftovers, portion them into glass containers and freeze for a busy work week, when all your Christmases may not come at once.

If you have some great tips on how to make Christmas (and any other big celebrations) eco-friendly, please share them with us and other *GI News* readers by adding a post.

Dietitian Sue Radd is the author of *The Breakfast Book* and co-author of *Eat to Live*, acclaimed for showing how savvy eating can combat cancer and heart disease and improve wellbeing. Check out: www.sueradd.com

Posted by GI Group at [8:18 AM](#) _

[Busting Food Myths with Nicole Senior](#)

I can't lose weight because I've got a slow metabolism

Fact: Many people believe they have difficulty losing weight because they have a 'slow metabolism' implying this is outside their control when in fact this isn't true. (An exception is poor thyroid function which slows metabolism and requires treatment with medication). Boosting your own metabolism is possible, but perhaps not in the ways you think.



Nicole Senior

What is metabolism?

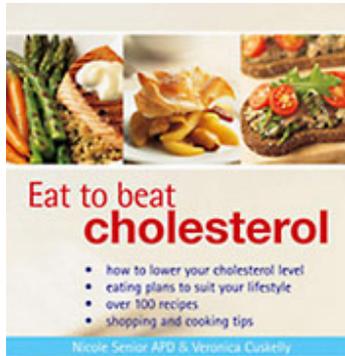
The term metabolism (or metabolic rate) refers to the amount of energy the body uses each day – like a daily energy budget - and is measured as kilojoules/Calories. Spending more energy than your daily budget means you need to dip into your energy savings -body fat. Unlike a financial deficit, an energy deficit can be a good thing because it causes weight loss. Metabolism consists of three basic components: Basal Metabolic Rate; thermogenesis; and physical activity. There are ways you can boost spending on all three fronts.

Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR also called Resting Metabolic Rate or RMR) is the energy you spend to sustain basic physiological processes such as keeping your heart beating, your brain and nervous system firing and your liver and kidneys working. Your BMR is primarily related to your lean body mass, so developing and maintaining muscle is a great way to spend more energy (even when you're sitting still!). There's no need to sign up for Mr/Ms Universe, but ensuring you do some resistance (strength) training as part of your fitness regime is recommended. Remember not all resistance training is lifting dumbbells in a gym, you can also use your own body weight such as lunges, squats and push-ups, or therabands (large rubber bands used for resistance exercises). Many yoga and pilates exercises build muscle strength as well as flexibility. Talk to a fitness professional about a suitable resistance training program for you.

Thermogenesis is the energy you spend to digest and metabolise your food. Starving yourself actually lowers your energy budget as well as having the obvious negative physical and psychological consequences. Interestingly protein needs more energy to utilise and this one of the reasons higher protein diets seem to work. Ensure you eat enough food at regular intervals and include protein foods such as lean meat, skinless chicken, fish, eggs, dairy food, legumes and nuts in your meals and snacks. There's no need to go to extremes with the protein and squeeze out smart carbs such as wholegrains, fruits and legumes, but simply balance your meals with some protein foods. For example, rather than just a salad sandwich on wholegrain bread, 'beef' things up a little by adding some lean meat, chicken, salmon, tofu or cottage cheese.

Physical activity is perhaps the most obvious way to increase your metabolism, and the more you do the more energy you'll spend. You can start today and the effects are immediate. Before you say, "I don't have the time to exercise" you need to know that just moving your body more can help. Being more active can mean sitting less and standing more, driving less and walking more for short trips (and always taking the stairs rather than the escalator), or taking time for active recreation such as gardening or visiting the park. If you do some high intensity exercise, you will continue to spend energy for hours after you stop exercising.

Boosting your metabolism is within your reach and one example of when spending up big is a good thing!



Click on the cover to purchase

Dietitian Nicole Senior is Nutrition Editor for *Super Food Ideas* and author of *Eat to Beat Cholesterol*. Check out: www.eattobeatcholesterol.com.au

Posted by GI Group at [8:16 AM](#) __

[Dr David's Tips for Raising Healthy Kids](#)

Walk the walk

There's a pretty widespread belief out there that that we need bike tracks, parks and playgrounds to encourage people to exercise. That it's the physical environment that encourages healthy behaviour. Not so says Johannes Brug, professor of epidemiology at VU University Medical Centre in Amsterdam. His review of 50 studies published in the journal *Obesity Reviews* found absolutely no association between aesthetics, weather and geographical influences such as beaches and bushwalks on levels of physical activity. It also found only a limited association between the availability, accessibility and convenience of recreational facilities and exercise. What works? Well, according to Brug parents setting an example of playing and exercising with friends are more likely to get people up and moving than the availability and convenience of recreational facilities.



It's no surprise to learn that when parents get active, so do their kids. A number of studies have

already shown that we learn our physical activity habits from our family. Researchers in France found that teens were twice as likely to take part in structured physical activities outside school when both parents played a sport. They also found that teenage boys were twice as likely to be highly inactive if both parents watched TV for more than 2 hours a day!

So what should you give the kids this Christmas? Well before you head off to the sports store for a baseball mitt or a basket ball hoop, how about a written promise to reserve at least one day each weekend dedicated to fun, family fitness stuff – things the whole family can enjoy together. Here are some ideas for starters: a bike ride, a hike or bush walk, tip or tag footie, a game of tennis or table tennis, swimming at the local beach or pool.

Please post your comments on what's worked getting you and your family more active (and having fun) right here. Remember, active kids stay active for life. For more information, check out the [OWL website](#).



Dr David Ludwig

– Dr David Ludwig is Director of the Optimal Weight for Life (OWL) program at Children's Hospital Boston and author of [Ending the Food Fight](#)

Posted by GI Group at [8:14 AM](#) _

[Move It & Lose It with Prof Trim](#)

Does glucosamine work?

Getting active can really be a pain for some people. Here's a common question I get asked: 'I'd love to become a bit more active and do my 30 minutes brisk walking a day, but I have troubles with knees and hips hurting. I've heard that glucosamine is good for arthritis and friends that say they have been helped by this. Is this true or is it all in the mind?' Putting one's facetious hat on, one could reply who cares if it is all in the mind – provided it works. But then that might be an expensive lesson. Now putting back the professorial hat, I can state the facts as they are now known.



Dr Garry Egger aka Prof Trim

Glucosamine has been found in some studies to have a better effect than placebo in reducing joint pain from arthritis. This has led medical practitioners working in the area from having a healthy scepticism, to actively promoting the product. However, since that happened, there has been one major meta-analysis (a combination of all the major studies done on the topic), to show that it may not be as successful as is often proposed. It is possible though that this is because of a wide variation in effect between different individuals.

The bottom line that comes out of this is that some individuals may, and do, indeed get significant relief from arthritis and joint pain from the use of glucosamine. Variations in the active ingredient in different formulations may make comparisons odious, so potential users are advised to seek reputable manufacturers. The combination of glucosamine and chondroitin is also thought to provide best benefits.

Another over-the-counter preparation with published benefits for joint pain, is a substance known as SAME (s-adenosyl methionine). This is promoted more as a mood enhancing substance – for which it also has some evidence – and is sold in products with names like ‘Mood Enhancer’ and ‘Mood Lift’. Again however, while there is reputable published support for SAME, the results may be in the eye (or knee, or hip) of the beholder.

– Click for more information on [Professor Trim](#).

Posted by GI Group at [8:12 AM](#) __

[Reviews](#)

GI News top 10 cookbooks

Cookbooks have to be one of the most popular presents these days. There they are gorgeous and glossy and piled high on the tables at the front of the shop. It's all too tempting. But if you think these coffee table cookbooks may be making you (and your family) fat, spiking blood glucose levels and clogging arteries, turn away from the glittering tables because the recipes really do tend to be packed with more saturated fat, salt, added sugar and refined flour than you and your family need on a daily basis. These books and their recipes are in the keep for an occasional treat category.



For cookbooks that will look after your body as well as delight your tastebuds, check out some of our favourites that we have reviewed in *GI News*. There are delicious recipes packed with naturally low GI ingredients, good fats, and herbs and spices that certainly don't disappoint in the flavour department. And they are all in print or available online because we have checked, so don't let the bookseller tell you they aren't available because he's too lazy to order it in! In alphabetical order:

- *Delicious Living* – Peter Howard (available in Australia)
- *Eat to Beat Cholesterol* – Nicole Senior and Veronica Cuskelly (available in Australia and online from www.eattobeatcholesterol.com.au)
- *Glycemic Index Cooking Made Easy* – Jennie Brand-Miller et al (available in the US/Canada from Rodale)
- *Healthy Eating for Families (Healthy Eating for Australian Families)* – Rosemary Stanton (available in the UK, US/Canada and Australia)
- *Lighten Up* – Jill Dupleix (available in the UK, US/Canada and Australia)
- *The Low GI Diet Cookbook* – Jennie Brand-Miller et al (available in the UK, US/Canada and Australia)
- *Low GI Gluten-free Living* – Kate Marsh (available in Australia)
- *The Low GI Life Plan* Jennie Brand-Miller & Kaye Foster-Powell with recipes by Lisa Lintner (available in UK, US/Canada and Australia)
- *The Low GI Vegetarian Cookbook* – Kate Marsh (available in the UK, US/Canada and Australia)
- *Zest: The Nutrition for Life Cookbook* Catherine Saxelby and Jennene Plummer (available in Australia or online from www.foodwatch.com.au)

Want to use herbs and spices to flavour your food instead of salt, then here are two books to help you get started:

- *Spice and Herb Bible (Spice Notes in Australia)* – Ian Hemphill with recipes by *GI News* chef, Kate Hemphill. (available in UK, US/Canada and Australia and online from www.herbies.com.au).
- *Sticks, Seeds, Pods & Leaves* – Ian and Liz Hemphill with *GI News* editor Philippa Sandall as co-author (available in Australia and online from www.herbies.com.au)

Why not combine a book with a gift certificate for cooking classes?



Lisa Lintner

- **In Sydney**, Lisa Lintner, who created the recipes for *The Low GI Life Plan*, runs classes that are all about enhancing your health and improving your cooking skills. Her seasonal, delicious and easy recipes incorporate low GI carbs with a wide variety of organic vegetables and fruit, lean protein and fish, nuts, grains and beans. For more details: www.lisalintner.com.au
- **In London**, our *GI News* chef, Kate Hemphill runs small lecture-style and private classes. Kate's cooking and recipes are modern and relaxed. 'For everyday cooking I like to be quite spontaneous and adventurous – and having grown up around herbs and spices, they are an intrinsic part of my cooking and recipe development,' she says. For more details: www.lovetocook.co.uk

Posted by GI Group at [8:10 AM](#) __

[Your Questions Answered](#)

Why are my blood glucose levels so high when I am doing all the right things?

This has to be one of the most common questions we get asked. And yes it can be very frustrating and worrying. But our answer has to be that since we don't know you and what you are doing right or wrong, we suggest you see your doctor, dietitian, or diabetes educator and/or exercise specialist. We can only reiterate what you probably already know: lifestyle changes, including diet and exercise are an essential part of managing type 2 diabetes, along with any medication you need to take. Regular physical activity and improved eating habits really can reduce your blood glucose levels, improve how your body's insulin works and reduce your risk of developing diabetes and its complications. Of course the key is knowing what to eat and the type and amount of exercise that will help.

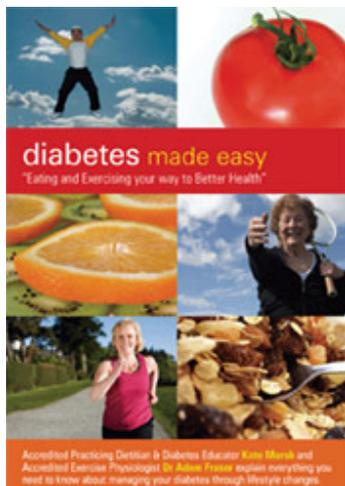


Kate Marsh

So if you want to tune into some expert advice on managing diabetes, you may like to check out an audio CD that's been put together by Accredited Practicing Dietitian and Diabetes Educator Kate Marsh and Accredited Exercise Physiologist Dr Adam Fraser. It covers everything you need to know about managing diabetes through lifestyle changes and all you have to do is pop it into your computer or download it to your iPod. It's also helpful for anyone with pre-diabetes (impaired glucose tolerance) or insulin resistance who wants to reduce their risk of developing diabetes. Here's what Kate says:

Play the Podcast above or download here 

Kate and Adam have put together a special lifestyle changes audio CD for women with PCOS, too.



- *Diabetes Made Easy* AUD\$55.00 including GST
- *PCOS Made Easy* AUD\$55.00 including GST.

To order your copy, call Northside Nutrition and Dietetics on 612 9415 4845 or [ORDER](#) online.

Are chromium supplements advantageous for people suffering from type 2 diabetes, syndrome X or hypoglycemia.

Chromium is an essential mineral that plays an important role in how our bodies metabolise carbohydrate, fat and protein. Current research suggests that it helps insulin work more effectively in the cells of the body, which in turn will help the body manage blood glucose levels better. So, if you have type 2 diabetes, will taking extra chromium as a supplement improve your blood glucose levels? To date studies have yielded conflicting results. ‘A number of studies have been done to see whether or not people with diabetes benefit from a chromium supplement. To date, there’s no compelling evidence for Australians or North Americans,’ says *New Glucose Revolution for Diabetes* author Alan Barclay. ‘There is one study from China that showed significant improvement in blood glucose levels when people took either 200 or 1000 micrograms of chromium picolinate each day for 4 months. But the Chinese food supply is very different from that of Australia or North America. We would suggest that differences in both the food supply and people’s food choices account for the difference in results of the various studies from around the world.’



In *GI News* in September 2006 we reported on a small double blind study by Julie Martin from the University of Vermont that was published in *Diabetes Care*. She found that ‘chromium picolinate supplementation in subjects with type 2 diabetes who are taking sulfonylurea agents significantly improves insulin sensitivity and glucose control’. The researchers tested whether chromium supplements were useful in combination with a sulfonylurea medication – an older class of diabetes drugs that often spur weight gain. They randomly assigned 29 adults with diabetes to take either the medication plus 1,000 micrograms of chromium picolinate per day or the drug plus a placebo (sugar pill) for 6 months. In the end, study participants who took the supplement showed greater improvements in insulin sensitivity and blood glucose control. They also gained less weight and body fat than those on the medication alone. However, we would suggest caution re this interesting result – the researchers did not monitor the participants’ food or physical activity before or during the study. So it is not possible to say conclusively that the improvements were due to the chromium picolinate alone.

In addition, the body loses many vitamins and minerals (including chromium) in urine, and when urination increases, as it does with poorly managed diabetes, losses can be excessive and lead to a deficiency. Most people with type 2 diabetes can reverse this deficiency within a few months by achieving and maintaining optimal blood glucose levels. When first diagnosed, it may be useful to take a multivitamin and mineral supplement to boost the replenishment process. But once an individual is managing blood glucose levels and eating a healthy diet this should no longer be necessary. As for chromium, the body only needs only a minute amount – around 25 micrograms (mcg) a day for women and 35 mcg a day for men. And it is found in many foods. Good sources are bran-based breakfast cereals and wholegrain breads and cereals; egg yolk,

brewers yeast and yeast extracts (eg, Vegemite); cheese; fruits such as apple, oranges and pineapple; vegetables such as broccoli, mushrooms, potatoes with their skin on, tomatoes; muscle and some organ meats (eg, liver); peanuts; and some spices.

Is there a role for chromium supplements in treating certain types of mood disorders including atypical depression? I have read that chromium relates to the way insulin affects neurotransmitters including serotonin in the brain.

A few studies, which have included a relatively small number of people, have demonstrated improvements in mental health (generally depressive type illnesses) after taking around 600 micrograms of chromium a day for several months. The brain's preferred fuel is carbohydrate, and given chromium's role in carbohydrate metabolism, it is perhaps unsurprising that some people may experience improvements in organic brain function and mental performance if they are deficient in this essential mineral. More research is definitely warranted in this interesting area.



However, there is no evidence of widespread chromium deficiency in North Americans or Australians, so it would be irresponsible for health authorities to recommend widespread chromium supplementation as a routine therapy for depressive or other mental illnesses at this stage. The general recommendation to all people to consume a healthy balanced diet is perhaps the best way to ensure chromium deficiency is not a contributing factor to these kind of illnesses.

Posted by GI Group at [8:08 AM](#) _

[Your Success Stories](#)

‘I finally got pregnant! And all because I stayed committed to a low GI diet so that my insulin levels wouldn’t rise too high.’ – Stephanie

‘I’m 29 and have PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome) – I was diagnosed in my early teens. My symptoms are irregular periods, infertility and excess of testosterone levels (hormone imbalance). I didn’t find out until this year that the main underlying problem was my insulin level. I did lots of research on my own about PCOS and if there was a way to reverse my condition because I wanted to start a family, and I found that being on a low GI diet was the ticket. I’m not overweight (that can be another side effect of having PCOS) but after only 3 months of being on a low GI diet, I lost 10 pounds and I and my cycles became regular. Then the shock of my life came when I found out that I was pregnant! After all these years of doctors

telling me that getting pregnant would be a great challenge or that it won't happen at all! And all because I stayed committed to a low GI diet, so that my insulin levels wouldn't rise too high. I've finally learned that we can reverse our health conditions once we have the knowledge of what the "trigger" is and I believe in nature's way of doing this. Knowledge is power and I'm staying on the low GI diet for as long as I can because I know I've seen the great results for myself.'



'In late November 2006, I decided to commit to a regular exercise regime AND a low GI diet. I have lost approximately 10 kilos (22 lbs) in the process and I feel terrific.' – Fil

'I am writing this to you a little worse for wear after having completed the 14 km (8.7 mile) City to Surf run yesterday [this was sent to *GI News* on August 13] in Sydney. A little worse for wear is my way of saying that your body at 44 years of age lets you know when you push the boundaries after a workout like that. So today, my legs and knee joints in particular are reminding me of my efforts yesterday.

But the really good news is that I shaved almost 15 minutes off my time last year and am back at work the next day whereas this time last year, I was far too sore and sorry to leave my house. What has caused this transition? It is really simple. In late November 2006, I decided to commit to a regular exercise regime AND a low GI diet. I have lost approximately 10 kilos (22 lbs) in the process and I feel terrific. I can also sense that my body is more appreciative of the way I am treating it than ever before. I had follow up blood tests about 2 months ago which confirmed that all pre-diabetes triggers (cholesterol, sugar levels, triglycerides etc) had fallen well below the acceptable limits which is a fantastic turn around based on earlier results some 8 months earlier.



Getting both medical and physical confirmation about the benefits of my new lifestyle changes has been such a positive experience and I can only say thank you to the whole GI team on providing me with the information I needed at the right time. I feel very fortunate to have been able to “reverse” some of the telltale signs associated with men in my age group and look forward to encouraging the rest of my family to embrace this lifestyle as well because the results simply speak for themselves. Bring on the 2008 City to Surf I say!’

Inspire Others - Share Your GI Story

If healthy eating the GI way has made a difference to your life by helping you achieve blood glucose control or lose weight, please share your success with readers of GI News. It's the real life success stories that give people the motivation they need to get started and help them appreciate that they are not alone. Just click anywhere in this text box to share your story. As a thank you, we will send you a copy of "Shopper's Guide to GI Values 2008" if your story is published in GI News



Posted by GI Group at [8:06 AM](#) _

[GI Symbol News with Alan Barclay](#)

With the New Year just around the corner, GI Ltd CEO Alan Barclay provides *GI News* readers with a peak at what's in store for GI labelling in 2008.



Regulations

Food Standards Australia New Zealand is aiming to release a final draft of its nutrition, health and related claim legislation for (hopeful) incorporation into the Food Standards Code in 2008. The draft legislation includes provisions for GI claims that reference the Australian Standard, *Glycemic Index of Foods AS4694-2007*. This means that Australia will become the first country to introduce comprehensive legislation for regulating GI claims. This has generated considerable interest from regulatory agencies around the world looking to develop similar provisions.

The role of low GI diets in preventing lifestyle diseases

Hot on the heels of the release of the *Cochrane Review*: 'Low glycaemic index or low glycaemic load diets for overweight and obesity' in 2007, a comprehensive systematic review and meta-analysis for the role of low GI diets in preventing lifestyle-related diseases is due for publication in one of the world's most prestigious nutrition journals early in 2008. This will add to the already powerful evidence for the benefits of low GI diets for long-term health and wellbeing.

Expanding the GI Symbol Program

GI Ltd is investigating opportunities to establish bases in key international territories in 2008, to promote the availability of healthy low GI foods around the world. Email Alan for more information.

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