GI News—August 2008

- Fruit juice and diabetes risk
- Turmeric’s blood glucose benefits
- Can you worry the weight off?
- Low GI diet reduces cancer risk
- Will jelly beans at half time give sporty kids more energy?
- *GI News* Chinese edition launched

This month, as *GI News* heads into its fourth year with 50,000 plus subscribers, Prof Jennie Brand Miller sets out the key to eating a low GI diet and Susie Burrell begins a new series for Healthy Kids sharing some practical lessons she has learned as a specialist paediatric dietitian. On the food front, spice supremos Ian and Liz Hemphill share their recipes that make the most of turmeric and Catherine Saxelby checks out cranberries, sorting the health from the hype. Of course there are the usual features including our popular Success Stories and feedback where we answer your Curly Questions about carbs, the GI and blood glucose.

Good eating, good health and good reading.

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**Food for Thought**

**The lowdown on low GI eating**  
Prof Jennie Brand-Miller talks to *GI News* with the release of the fourth edition of her book, *The Low GI Handbook* (previously published as *The New Glucose Revolution*). We asked her to describe what she feels is the key to a low GI diet.

'The word “low” that seems to throw people. Eating the low GI way is not putting yourself on a low carb diet. If anything, it’s a “slow” carb diet. It’s about choosing the right carbs to fuel your body and power your life.'
I like to use the analogy of a car – if you don't put gas in your car, it won't go. And, if you put the wrong gas in your car, it won't perform at its best and it may even break down. It’s the same with your body – carbohydrate is your fuel – it’s what makes you go because it gives you energy.

We don’t specify how many carbs you should be eating (that’s your call) – but we do say wherever you can opt for the low GI ones. Why? Well, low GI foods are the “slow” carbs and high GI foods are the “fast” carbs.

Slow is better than fast for you and me most of the time. This is because fast carbs stress your body because they release too much blood glucose (energy) too quickly and your body has to really work overtime producing insulin to reduce the glucose levels. This not only stresses the organs (leading to disease), it also depletes your energy levels, which makes you feel hungry – possibly leading to snacking, snacking, snacking and becoming overweight.

Slow carbs, on the other hand, release energy over a longer period of time and sustain it at the level you need to perform at your peak. You may also lose weight eating this way, and keep it off – reducing your risk of “breaking down” with disease.

As for the health benefits, well, a low GI diet is proven to reduce the risks of diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers. And best of all you’ll lose some weight and keep it off.

But while I am a firm believer in the idea that NOT all carbs (just like fats or proteins) are created equal, I would be the first to say that you should not use the GI in isolation. So a low GI claim on chocolate would be inappropriate. A low GI claim on cola would be inappropriate. But it is appropriate on foods that are nutritious in their own right, as well as being low GI.

So, what’s the key to eating a low GI diet? It’s simply choosing “slow carbs” to fuel your body like pasta, legumes, fruit, lower GI starchy vegetables and dairy products. Of course you also need to eat plenty of vegetables and lean protein and exercise. The GI isn’t a magic bullet!’

Listen to the podcast interview with Prof Jennie Brand-Miller recorded in June 2008.
News Briefs

Mediterranean diet and diabetes
Miguel Martinez-Gonzalez and colleagues at the University of Navarra in Spain writing in the *British Medical Journal* report that sticking closely to a Mediterranean-style diet may protect against the development of type 2 diabetes. Study participants were 13,380 healthy university graduates (average age 38). Their dietary habits were validated with a food frequency questionnaire when they were recruited and they were followed up, on average, for nearly 4½ years during which time 103 of them were diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. The researchers found that those who stuck closely to a Mediterranean style diet had a much lower risk of diabetes – high adherence was associated with an 83% relative reduction in the risk of developing diabetes. The authors conclude by calling for larger studies to confirm their findings.

Eat whole fruit not juiced and plenty of green leafy vegetables
The health benefits of eating plenty of fruit and vegetables are already well known but a study published in *Diabetes Care* in July reports that you need to be a bit choosy if your goal is to reduce your diabetes risk. Researchers from the Harvard Medical School and associates looked at the diets of more than 71,000 healthy women (at the start of the study) aged 38–63 for 18 years to see if there was a link between developing type 2 diabetes and fruit and vegetable consumption. The women completed a food questionnaire every four years. What did they find?

- An increase of 3 servings a day of whole fruit was associated with an 18% reduced risk of type 2 diabetes.
- An increase of 1 serve of green leafy vegetables a day was associated with a 9% reduced risk of diabetes.
- One extra serving of fruit juice a day was associated with an 18% increase in diabetes risk.

The take home message to reduce your diabetes risk, according to the researchers, is eat whole fruit not juiced and plenty of green leafy vegetables. They suggest replacing refined grains and white potatoes with fruits and vegetables and sound a note of caution against counting 100% fruit juice as a serving of fruit.
Low GI diet reduces cancer risk
A number of studies have shown a higher risk of colorectal cancer in people with diabetes and more recently another study found that women with diabetes were more than three times more likely to develop endometrial cancer than women without diabetes. Writing in the June issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Italian researchers report the conclusions of their meta-analysis of 39 studies looking at GI, GL and cancer risk (breast, colorectal, endometrial and pancreatic). They found that:

- A high GL diet increased the risk of colorectal cancer by 26% and endometrial cancer by 36%.
- A high GI diet increased the risk of colorectal cancer by 18% and endometrial cancer by 22%.

What's new?
Glycosmedia separates the wheat from the chaff
Feel like you are drowning in diabetes information (research findings, news stories, journal articles) overload? This new website and free subscription email service may be just what you need to separate the wheat from the large amount of chaff.

Glycosmedia – www.glycosmedia.com – is an independent diabetes news service delivering the latest news and information. It’s specifically set up to cater to the needs of professionals working in the field of diabetes, both in the clinic and in research. But it will also be of interest to allied professionals and people with diabetes wanting to stay up to date with the latest developments.

Its point of difference from other online health/science news services is that the Glycos editorial team ‘hand picks’ and reviews all material (no automated trawling) making it a very cost effective way in terms of your time of keeping up to date with the latest reports and viewpoints, filtering out the press release type material.

GI News Chinese edition launched
A special Chinese edition of GI News is now available. Posted monthly, ginewschi.blogspot.com is edited by Selena Chan and translated into Traditional Chinese by Jimmy Louie – both Accredited Practising Dietitians. Jimmy is also a PhD student in the Human Nutrition Unit at the University of Sydney.
**Diabetes and UTIs**

Just as diabetes can cause complications such as heart disease and stroke, it also increases the risk for UTIs. Often, a recurring bladder infection prompts a physician to check a patient's blood glucose level and leads to a diagnosis of diabetes. Possible reasons for increased susceptibility to UTIs are the effects of high blood glucose levels on the immune system, bacterial growth, bladder dysfunction, and the increased incidence of Candida or yeast infections. Check out a new NIDDK booklet titled *What I Need to Know About Urinary Tract Infections*.

**Food of the Month with Catherine Saxelby**

**Cranberries – is the jury still out?**

The tart, bright red cranberry is a cousin of the blueberry. Fresh or frozen, like other berries, they are low in carbs and calories and virtually fat free. They are a good source of vitamin C along with some folate, potassium and beta-carotene which is converted to vitamin A in the body for healthy eyes. They rank highly in terms of antioxidant content and are particularly rich in the OPCs, a group of flavonoid antioxidants also found in blueberries, strawberries, raspberries and other blue-red fruit. These phenol-based antioxidants have been shown to protect the heart and blood vessels from the fatty build-up that leads to heart disease.

**Cranberries and cystitis:** Cranberries (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*) have a long history as a remedy in traditional medicine. Over the past 15 years, cranberry juice and supplements have been extensively studied as an aid to help prevent recurrent urinary tract infections (UTIs) and incontinence, especially in older women. UTIs or cystitis (inflammation of the bladder), is usually caused by *E. coli*, a bacteria commonly found in the intestines. It appears that cranberries’ anti-bacterial action comes from a group of plant chemicals called Oligomeric Proanthocyanidins (OPCs) or simply proanthocyanidins which stop bacteria from ‘sticking’ to the bladder wall and multiplying. Fewer bugs mean less likelihood they can multiply and take hold. *The Cochrane Review* on cranberries reports that ‘there is some evidence that cranberry juice may decrease the number of symptomatic UTIs over a 12 month period, particularly for women with recurrent UTIs … Further properly designed studies with relevant outcomes are needed.’
Getting cranberry’s anti-bacterial benefits: Fresh may be best, but it isn’t widely available. Some 95% of each year’s crop is processed – frozen, and made into sweetened juices and drinks, sauces and dried cranberries. Check out the recommended serving sizes and see how the calories stack up.

- **Fresh cranberries:** Here’s what you get: 100 g berries provides 46 calories (194 kJ) and 8 g carbs (includes 4 g sugars mostly glucose) and 4 g fibre.

- **Frozen cranberries:** This is closest most of us can get to the real thing. The packet’s recommended 100 g serving has 57 calories (240 kJ), 10 g carbohydrate (of which 4 g is sugar) and 2 g fibre. There’s nothing added so you’ll find these really tart.

- **Cranberry juice drink:** The base of “Sex in the City’s Cosmopolitan cocktail (along with vodka and lime juice), cranberry juice isn’t 100% juice. Look at the labels and you’ll find that the main ingredient apart from water is reconstituted cranberry juice concentrate with added sugar to sweeten. Its final sugar content is around 12% – similar to apple juice but higher than orange juice at 8%. A 250 ml (1 cup) glass of cranberry juice drink has 123 calories (516 kJ) and around 30 g of sugar (that’s about 6 level teaspoons). It also has nearly 40 mg vitamin C (almost your day’s intake), but this is actually added to the juice as a preserving aid and to even out seasonal variations. Its GI is 52 (Ocean Spray Cranberry Cocktail). You can get an artificially sweetened light version with only 20 calories (83 kJ) and 5 grams of sugars.

- **Sweetened dried cranberries** (craisins): Like the juice, dried cranberries have to be sweetened, unlike sultanas or raisins which have a higher natural sugar content. Ocean Spray dried cranberries say they’re 61% cranberries and the rest is sugar. A 30 g serve of dried cranberries provides 98 calories (410 kJ), 1.5 g fibre and 25 g carbohydrate, which is mostly the added sugars, and a GI of 64.

- **Cranberry extract:** If you can’t face drinking the juice or snacking on the dried form, perhaps a concentrated extract in a pill is for you. All the major supplement manufacturers have one.

- **As for cranberry sauce** – it’s great for the turkey, but it’s really like jam or chutney. Not a whole lot of nutrition. So enjoy it, but make sure you have a little cranberry with your turkey rather than the other way round.

The take-home message: For many people cranberries will qualify as a super food simply thanks to their ability to ward off chronic UTIs. But they just aren’t up there in the truly super food league that includes broccoli, oily fish and almonds.

Dietitian and popular nutrition communicator, Catherine Saxelby, is the author of *Zest* and *Nutrition for Life*

For more information on super foods and healthy eating, visit Catherine’s website: www.foodwatch.com.au
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 her website: www.lovetocook.co.uk. For now, prepare and share good food with family and friends.

**Steak Salad with Roast Sweet Potato Wedges**

After being told to up my iron intake, I thought this was the perfect dish. The sweet potato cooked like this make a great alternative to those fatty fried wedges served with sour cream and sweet chilli sauce! Buy the best quality lean steak you can afford – and remember that you don’t need a big piece to get heaps of healthy benefits.

Serves 2

1 large or 2 smaller orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (about 300 g/10 oz), scrubbed and cut into wedges
1 small punnet of cherry tomatoes
250 g (8 oz) sirloin steak or 2 scotch fillets
60 g (2 oz) rocket, washed
sumac, to serve (optional)

- Preheat the oven to 180ºC (350ºF)
- Toss the sweet potato wedges in a little olive oil (or brush the oil over with a pastry brush), place in a baking dish and roast in the oven for 20–25 minutes until tender and golden. After 15 minutes, add the cherry tomatoes as they don't need as long to cook.
- Meanwhile, heat a heavy based pan to high and season the steak with freshly ground black pepper. Sear the steak for 1 minute each side, then cook for a further 3 minutes each side (depending on size of steak, for medium rare). Allow to rest for 3 minutes before slicing.
- Serve steak on top of rocket leaves with sweet potato and tomatoes and a sprinkle of sumac, if using. And of course pile your plate with any other green vegetables in season that you enjoy.
Per serving
1585 kJ/ 377 calories; 38 g protein; 10 g fat (includes 4 g saturated fat and 94 mg cholesterol); 30 g carbohydrate; 6 g fibre

Turmeric tales
Turmeric has a long history of use in traditional medicine in reducing inflammation, healing wounds and relieving pain. Drew Tortoriello MD from the Naomi Berrie Diabetes Center at Columbia University Medical Center, and his colleagues presented their research findings at ENDO 2008 that turmeric and its active anti-oxidant ingredient – curcumin – reverses many of the inflammatory and metabolic problems associated with obesity and improves blood-glucose control in mice with type 2 diabetes. ‘It’s too early to tell whether increasing dietary curcumin (through turmeric) intake in obese people with diabetes will show a similar benefit,’ says Tortoriello. ‘Although the daily intake of curcumin one might have to consume as a primary diabetes treatment is likely impractical, it is entirely possible that lower dosages of curcumin could nicely complement our traditional therapies as a natural and safe treatment.’

We asked Liz and Ian Hemphill of Herbies Spices to tell us a bit more about using turmeric in cooking. ‘It is closely related to ginger and galangal. Its lumpy, orange-fleshed rhizome has a distinctly earthy aroma and flavour and contains the powerful colouring agent, curcumin. It’s an “amalgamating” spice sometimes called Indian saffron because of its bright colour and is found in curry powders and many spice blends including the delicious Moroccan chermoula. The turmeric commonly used in cooking is either Madras or Alleppey and the latter is better when you want the true flavour of turmeric. You can make an attractively golden coloured and tasty rice dish with turmeric. When cooking by the absorption method, add ½ teaspoon of turmeric powder, a cinnamon stick, 4 cloves and 4 green cardamom pods for every 1 cup of basmati rice covered with water. And be careful not to spill turmeric on your clothes, it is almost impossible to get the stain out.’

Dhai baingon (Eggplant with yoghurt)
On one of our ‘Spice Discovery Tours’ to India, we encountered this dish in a splendid domed dining room in Jaipur. We immediately begged the recipe from the chef. After deciphering the handwriting, our version goes like this …
Serves 2 (or 4 as part of a meal)

1 large eggplant, sliced
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
3 onions, peeled and chopped
3 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
1 teaspoon Alleppey turmeric
1½ teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon chilli powder
1 teaspoon fenugreek leaves
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 cup (250 ml) water
200 g (1 cup) low-fat natural yoghurt
1 tablespoon fresh chopped coriander leaves

- Preheat the oven to 180ºC (350ºF).
- Drain the eggplant in a colander for 5–10 minutes. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a heavy-based pan and cook the eggplant slices in batches until lightly golden, adding more oil if necessary. Remove and set aside.
- Heat another tablespoon of oil in the pan and add the whole cumin seeds. Cook for 45 seconds, then add the chopped onion and tomatoes. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is transparent. Add turmeric, salt, 1 teaspoon of the ground cumin, coriander, chilli powder, fenugreek leaves and tomato paste, then stir in the water. Continue cooking over moderate heat until onion and tomato are soft and most of the liquid has evaporated.
- Oil the inside of a medium-sized ovenproof dish or casserole and spoon in half the onion-tomato mixture. Arrange a layer of eggplant slices on top. Cover with the remaining onion-tomato mixture and finish with more eggplant slices. Mix the yoghurt with the remaining teaspoon of ground cumin and spread over the top. Cover tightly with foil, then place in the oven until warmed through. Serve sprinkled with fresh coriander leaves.

Per serving (4 serves as part of a meal)
820 kJ/ 195 calories; 8 g protein; 10 g fat (includes 1 g saturated fat and 2.5 mg cholesterol); 15 g carbohydrate; 7 g fibre

**Orzo and lentil stew with turmeric and bacon**
This is a lovely healthy winter dish. If you are being extremely health conscious, use a very lean cut of bacon, or leave it out and add 1 teaspoon of smoked paprika to the stew.
Serves 4

100 g (3½ oz) bacon short cuts, fat trimmed
1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
clove garlic, chopped
tsp ground turmeric
1/4 tsp ground cumin
pinch chilli powder
4 cups (1 litre) chicken stock
cup puy lentils, rinsed
1/2 cup orzo, stellini or other tiny pasta
150 g (5 oz) spinach, roughly chopped

- Cut the bacon into strips and saute for 5 minutes, until browned. Set aside.

- Heat the oil in a large saucepan and add the onion cooking for 5 minutes on a low heat, without browning, then add the garlic and cook a further 2 minutes. Add the turmeric, cumin and chilli powder, stir, and cook for 2 minutes, then pour in the stock.

- Add the lentils and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer. After 10 minutes add the pasta, spinach and cooked bacon to the pan. Stir frequently and season to taste.

- The dish is ready when the lentils and pasta are cooked. If you want this more like a soup, simply add more stock. Serve in shallow bowls with a dollop of crème fraiche if desired, and a good grind of cracked black pepper.

Per serving
1024 kJ/ 244 calories; 16 g protein; 9 g fat (includes 2 g saturated fat and 22 mg cholesterol); 22 g carbohydrate; 5 g fibre

Busting Food Myths with Nicole Senior

Myth: Stress keeps you trim

Fact: Wiry worry-worts really give the wrong impression about the role of stress and weight loss. It’s more likely that stress makes you fat.

And even if it doesn’t, the anxious “type A” personality or “stress junkie” is at greater risk of dying from a heart attack or stroke. So on any front, worry is worrying! So what’s the connection between stress and fatness? It seems there are both physiological and behavioural factors at play.

For starters, psychological stress elevates stress hormones, the main one being cortisol. Elevated cortisol levels over time actually create more body fat, and in the most risky places (around your middle). But hang on, aren’t stress hormones meant to help you ‘fight or flee’ and wouldn’t you need the body’s fuel sources such as fatty acids and glucose for this? While it’s true that stress hormones help liberate stored food energy at the time of the stress, if you don’t actually use this energy for fighting or fleeing the body goes into storage overdrive. And it goes where the body can reach it in a hurry for the next ‘threat’ – in the abdominal fat stores around the waist. Apart from making you fat, these stress hormones also create other metabolic disturbances such as high blood pressure, adverse blood lipids, and endothelial dysfunction (stiff blood vessels), all of which contribute to cardiovascular
disease risk. So what’s the antidote? If your body is hormonally set for ‘fight or flee’, then ‘fight’
apathy and ‘flee’ the scene and get some exercise – the best way to prevent stress-related damage.

Then of course there's that behavioural issue of comfort eating. How many times have you reached for
the chocolates, ice cream or cookie jar when a big hug, a few bouts with a punching bag or a change of
scene would have done the trick? Stress is unpleasant and many of us have a habit of soothing
unpleasantness with a quick fix of something yummy. And at times like these, broccoli just won’t do!
Since childhood we’ve been soothed from pain of all sorts with something sweet, rich or just plain
fattening. Of course there’s nothing wrong with a little eating to feel better, but when food is the
number one fix in our emotional toolkit, weight can get out of control.

Like many problems, the first step is acknowledging you’re a comfort eater – a food and feelings diary
can help spot triggers. Then, when you know what sets you off, it is then a matter of finding alternative
ways to soothe your troubles. Taking more time-out for things you enjoy, talking to a trusted friend,
going out for a walk, getting enough rest and generally not overwhelming yourself with too many tasks,
can help.

So the message is, stress less if you can. Flee with glee and a good pair of running shoes, and reach for
cuddles, not calories, when the going gets tough. Your heart will thank you.

Nicole Senior is author of Heart Food and Eat to Beat Cholesterol available from
www.greatideas.net.au
For more information on nutrition and heart health visit www.eattobeatcholesterol.com.au

Healthy Kids with Susie Burrell

In the coming months, pediatric dietitian Susie Burrell will share 10 little lifestyle lessons for healthy
kids and happy family meals with GI News readers.

Susie Burrell

Lifestyle Lesson 1: Children are unlikely to like vegetables first time around
What it is about vegetables? They are the most commonly reported foods that children do not like? The
lesson about veggies is essentially is it any wonder? Kids are smart, they get the message when Mum
and Dad get anxious and make a fuss about food. How many times do we tell children that they must
eat all their ice-cream? Like never. And yet, we do it all the time with vegetables. The key is get smart
and cut the fuss.

Most of the parents I see don't realise that you need to offer children new foods at least 7–10 times
before they will consider accepting it! How often did you offer your veggie refuser carrots or broccoli
before concluding that he or she didn’t like them? Probably a couple of times if you are like the Moms and Dads I chat to.

Remember, when your child vociferously proclaims he or she doesn’t ‘like’ veggies, it is not usually that they don’t like them, it’s more likely that they would much prefer something else, which in many cases turns into milk, fruit or toast as most parents don’t want their kids to go to bed hungry. And every time you cave in and produce that something else, you have put the ‘what to eat’ power into your child's hands, and boy do they know how to use it to get what they want!

You don’t have to become a sneaky chef hiding veggies in other foods like invisible friends. In fact, it’s not a solution at all to my mind because although you might be getting veggies into your kids, you aren’t getting your kids to think about veggies in a positive way at all. Here are a few tips that can help if you have a serial veggie refuser on your hands.

First, it doesn’t matter that they don’t eat an entire rainbow of different coloured vegetables (despite all the promotion). All that matters is that there are one or two varieties they are happy to eat, raw or cooked, each and every day. So, if your child is very happy to eat some frozen peas lightly blanched and some raw carrot or capsicum each day, be happy with that.

Secondly, never substitute your child’s half plate portion of fresh salad or vegetables with other foods. Offering your child other options sends the message that it is OK for your kids not to eat the vegetables and if they make enough fuss they won’t have to.

And make the vegetables taste good. Soggy overcooked broccoli is not particularly appealing to me, let alone a 2 year old who has probably eaten plenty of food already during the day. There’s nothing wrong with adding flavour (we expect it!). So give those veggies a bit of zing with honey or cheese sauces, roast them or make delicious salads or pizzas with the kids.

And never ever mention that they are in fact eating vegetables. You may be surprised how unnoticed it goes when you do not make such a fuss about it. And what's more, you'll be surprised at how many different veggies they are suddenly eating.

**Susie Burrell** (www.susieburrell.com.au) is one of Australia's leading dietitians; her unique training in both nutritional science and psychology helping thousands of adults, children and athletes reach their health and nutrition goals without diets or deprivation. As specialist Weight Management Dietitian at The Children's Hospital at Westmead, she develops and evaluates programs aimed at managing and preventing child and adolescent obesity. In her private practice, she balances her clinical work with her primary love, writing for both print and electronic media. Susie currently has a weekly column in *The Daily Telegraph's Simply Food* lift out as well as columns in *Good Health & Medicine, ALPHA* and *Dolly* magazines. She is also a regular guest on *FRESH* television and *The Today Show*.

**Move It & Lose It with Prof Trim**

**Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a queen, and dinner like a pauper**
We know that what we eat is important for weight gain. We know less about the importance of how we eat. Traditionally, it’s been thought that larger meals earlier in the day will lead to less weight gain, but this has typically come from the “Grandma’s knowledge’ school of good health.
Research carried out at the University of Texas has tended to support Grandma by showing that people who eat a large breakfast, tend to eat less over the remainder of the day. Dr JM de Castro used diet diaries over seven days for a group of males and females recruited for another study on diet. The total and meal intakes of food energy, the amounts of the macronutrients ingested and the density of intake occurring during five 4-hour periods were identified and related to overall and meal intakes during the entire day.

De Castro found that there was a reciprocal relationship between the amount of food eaten in the morning and the total amount eaten during the day, and a positive correlation between the amount eaten late in the evening and the total intake. There was a positive association, on the other hand, between the energy density of foods eaten at any time of the day and total intake.

In other words, low energy-dense foods (e.g. low GI breakfast cereals, low GI toast, fruit etc) eaten in the morning appears to be particularly satiating and reduces the total amount of food eaten later in the day. Late night snacks on the other hand lack satiating value and tend to result in greater overall intake and hence a greater risk of weight gain.

*Implication:* Grandma was right.

For more information on weight loss for men, check out Professor Trim.

**Curly Questions**

*Should you be worried about the GI status of your food?*

In this podcast recorded in July 2008, Prof Jennie Brand-Miller talks to ABC Radio's Hilary Harper and answers the question: "Should you be worried about the GI status of your food?" Jennie also answers questions from callers.

Play the Podcast (see GI News website)

*Some parents in my child’s under-9s sports team have decided to offer jelly beans as well as the usual orange segments at half time, as they think it will give the kids more energy to finish the game. Is this so? Can you suggest some healthier alternatives?*

We asked Dr Emma Stevenson, a specialist in sport nutrition to answer this: “Thanks for this good question. It is common belief that it is necessary to consume jelly sweets during exercise to provide more energy but in reality, energy stores will not have run out at half time. The most important thing is to ensure that the kids are well hydrated, so at half time the main focus should be providing them with fluid, either in the form of cold water or cordial. I would not encourage children as young as nine to be consuming sugary snacks or drinks during exercise, especially if they are overweight. My advice would be to carry on with the orange segments (perhaps sometimes providing fruit alternatives such as a handful of grapes or raisins) and ensure that some fluid is taken on board. After the game, you can encourage the intake of high carbohydrate foods for recovery but this can be in the form of fruit bread, malt loaf, bananas, low sugar cereal bars and low sugar cereals with milk. It is important that children do not associate exercise with the need to eat sweets to re-energise and good nutritional practices from
a young age need to be adopted.

'I am interested in grinding and flaking my own grain for home baking and muesli. What can you tell me about doing this?'

We aren’t experts in this, but here’s a tip from someone who really is the expert – Lorna Sass. Her fabulous book *Whole grains every day every way* is an invaluable and essential guide to cooking grains, and has some really great recipes (and it deservedly won a James Beard Award in 2006).

She reports that ‘a small coffee grinder makes a fine job of making coarse meal and grits from whole kernels and flour from rolled grains.’ This is probably a bit of a laborious way to grind and flake grain in the quantities you need for home baking and muesli, but worth a try. We have certainly used the coffee grinder option to make a sort of rolled oats flour for adding to muffin recipes as a partial substitution for refined flour. You might like to check out her website for more information. There’s contact form for detailed questions: www.lornasass.com.

Email your curly question about carbs, the GI and blood glucose to: gicurlyquestions@gmail.com

Your Success Stories

‘For anyone starting their journey into low GI eating, embrace it, the health benefits are enormous.’ – Robin

I discovered a low GI way of life in March 2006 when my weight was 125 kg (275 lbs). By August of that year my weight had dropped to 94 kg (207 lbs) and I was well on my way to a healthier life. I now weigh 85 kg (187 lbs) which is approximately 5 kg (11 lbs) over my ideal but I’ve kept it stable for all this time. I now work out at a gym for between 1 and 2 hours a day and have completed two marathons on the indoor rowing machine taking 3 hours 20 minutes to complete.

I’m about to challenge low GI eating again as it appears that I am a coeliac (diagnosis to be confirmed) which will cut out many of the healthy carbohydrates that I currently enjoy. Luckily I enjoy legumes and have no problem mashing cannellini beans, adding a bit of lemon juice and thyme and replacing pasta.

For anyone starting their journey into low GI eating, embrace it. The health benefits are enormous, the weight will fall off and you’ll never feel deprived or hungry.
Update: ‘My diagnosis has come back as positive for coeliac disease. Initially I was concerned at the high GI nature of the foods I was eating and finding that hunger pangs were setting in quickly. Thanks to the team at GI Success I obtained a copy of Low GI Gluten Free Living – fantastic. The Pistachio Apple Quinoa Porridge has become a staple in the mornings now. I saw a dietitian as we are required to when initially diagnosed and she pronounced my diet as excellent and that I'm more than getting the 30 g of fibre a day through the porridge, fruit, vegetables, legumes, seeds and nuts.’

‘I couldn’t believe how easy it has been to lose 19 kg.’ – Sue
After spending most of my life overweight and trying every weight loss program there is, I finally found low GI. What a revelation; the program of eating was simple. I enjoyed finding out the GI values of foods and couldn’t believe how easy it has been to lose 19 kg (42 lbs), feel terrific, not be hungry at all and have far more energy than before. I recommend a low GI diet to everyone. My thanks to all you experts for discovering this information for all of us.

Reversing pre-diabetes
GI News ran Karen’s story in January 2008, here’s her good news update.
‘Before beginning the low GI diet a year ago (May 2007), my BGLs were 7.0 mmol/L after the OGTT. After my latest HbA1c test and OGTT, this was non significant at 4.5 mmol/L. This is fantastic and the low GI diet and support of the team have helped significantly to reverse the pre-diabetes for me. Low GI has become my way of life now and I never feel like I am dieting.’ – Karen

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.

GI Symbol News with Alan Barclay

Getting those slow carbs into the shopping trolley
Around the globe, rates of overweight/obesity are growing at an alarming rate with type 2 diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers increasing as a direct result. Now more than ever, there is an urgent need to take action to stem the tide before it hits us like a tsunami of human suffering accompanied by unprecedented health care costs.

The current epidemic of obesity and associated lifestyle-related disease has multiple causes and it’s clear there isn’t going to be a simple solution or magic bullet. For example, our 20-year obsession with
low-fat/high-carb diets in the ‘West’ hasn’t stemmed the tide. Indeed, large dietary surveys suggest that as fat consumption went down, rates of overweight/obesity went up. It seems, according to an already large and rapidly growing body of evidence, that in cutting back on fats, we overlooked the quality of the carbs we typically put in their place – thus increasing the glycemic impact of the foods that make up the largest proportion of our diet.

In fact, apart from the simple sugars ‘bad’/complex starches ‘good’ story, carbs had received little attention until the Atkins low carb 're-Revolution' in the early 1990s really hit the headlines and best-seller lists. And Atkins got it right when he said that ‘Mankind is not geared to handle an abundance of refined carbohydrates.’ We aren’t. Atkins-type low-carb regimes are undoubtedly effective in the short and possibly even medium term for weight loss, but their long-term health benefits have long been questioned - and the jury is still out, despite one recent study finding that a “vegetarian-style” low-carbohydrate diet is as effective as other alternatives (“Mediterranean style” diets) to the low-fat diet for weight loss over a two year period. In addition, the environmental sustainability of a diet with an emphasis on eating large amounts of animal protein such as typical low-carb Atkins has to be a consideration.

What research on the GI over the past nearly 30 years shows is that there’s no need to avoid or drastically cut back entire food groups like carbs to reduce the glycemic impact of your diet. A low GI diet with its emphasis on ‘slow’ carbs to fuel your body and power your life will help you do just that. We also know from very large epidemiological surveys that low GI diets are flexible, livable, family friendly and help you optimise your insulin sensitivity and decrease your insulin levels over the whole day. With their emphasis on minimally processed plant foods, they are also better for the environment. Sustainable nutrition all-round we say.

**Woolworths Supermarkets joins the GI Symbol Program**
The GI Symbol was devised to help consumers put healthy low GI choices into the shopping trolley. The latest company to join the Program is Australia’s largest food retailer – Woolworths Supermarkets. In choosing the GI Symbol for its Select range, Woolworths is not only making the practical implementation of a low GI diet even simpler and more affordable than ever, it is sending out a loud and clear signal that that consuming more healthy low GI foods and beverages is one of the primary tools in the battle against obesity.

The GI Ltd team has worked closely with Woolworths for the past couple of years identifying and testing appropriate foods to ensure they met the program's strict nutrient criteria. The result is an all-new range of healthy low GI options under the Woolworths Select brand with packaged fruit, corn-based tortillas and breakfast cereals being the first on the shelves. Email us for more information: alan@gisymbol.com

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A reader drew our attention to a meal replacement product called BODYform recently with a GI of 15 and asked us what we knew about it and had we tested it.

No we haven’t tested it, but we took a look at the website of the Australian distributor (it’s a German product). The label states that it’s a ‘nutrient concentrate based on a double fermented wholegrain wheat product’. Checking the ingredient list, we found that as well as the ‘double fermented wheat’, it consists of fructose, soya lecithin, skim milk powder, yoghurt powder and whey protein powder, xanthan and guar gums and various vitamins and minerals. Each serving has 15 g protein, 6.6 g fats, 22.8 g carbs (15 g of these are sugars) and 7.8 g fibre. The product was GI tested in Germany we are told – but we don’t know by which laboratory or method. However, we can believe it would have a GI of around 15 as we have tested similarly constituted meal replacement products and their GI is typically between 10–22. The company marketing the product in Australia says it’s going to cost you around $5.20AUD a serving. A final note: It was good to see accurate information on the company’s website about GI – but then it would be since it appears to have been ‘borrowed’ direct from www.glycemicindex.com without acknowledgment.

Where can I get more information on GI testing?

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