

GI News—March 2009



- Low GI diet significantly helps improve blood glucose control
- 'Maybe it is time to start using the GI more' says ADA spokesperson
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- Johanna Burani's flourless chocolate hazelnut cake
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In this issue of *GI News*, we report on the recent *Cochrane* systematic review which finds that a low GI diet significantly helps people with diabetes to improve blood glucose control. Cochrane reviews are rather like the Gold Standard of evidence-based medical practice. Commenting on this review, American Dietetic Association spokesperson, Angela Ginn-Meadow, a certified diabetes educator at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Baltimore says: 'Maybe it is time to start using this tool [the glycemic index] more than we currently use it'. Since childhood obesity and long-term obesity are also strong risk factors, keeping weight down is also important in diabetes prevention and management. 'Using glycemic index as a goal really helps, because people with diabetes can feel hungrier and using glycemic index helps with satiety,' Ginn-Meadow said. 'Using glycemic index as a tool could be one thing people can do to stay satisfied longer.'

Good eating, good health and good reading.

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Food for Thought

Manage your budget and blood glucose with a low GI diet

If you want to cut costs in the supermarket, turn away from the high GI, super processed, energy-dense, prepackaged food aisle. Make the most of 'feel full' foods like slow digesting low GI carbs, lean protein-rich foods and foods that have lots of fibre and water. They will satisfy your appetite faster and keep you feeling fuller for longer by giving you plenty to chew on. Here are some tips that will have you living within your means, reducing the overall GI of your diet, shedding pounds without pangs (or maintaining that hard-won weightloss), and eating better than ever.

Eat more feel full, less processed foods like barley, beans and lentils. They are easy on the budget, great for the blood glucose and you'll be less likely to pick, pick, pick between meals.

- Choose seasonal fruits and veggies and store them separately (so vegetables don't ripen too fast), and at the right temperature (cold can actually damage produce like squash, tomatoes and oranges) to reduce wastage.
- Opt for cheap cuts, the lower priced lean meats. They are really flavoursome but may take a bit longer to cook. However, if you make double quantity and put half in the fridge or freezer for another day, you're ahead of the game.
- Stretch recipes with low GI legumes. Meat, chicken and fish are generally the most expensive items on the shopping list (even mince), so buy a little less and stretch the recipe. Make a spaghetti bolognese with mince and lentils, add beans to soups and casseroles and you'll be serving up delicious one-dish dinners with leftovers for lunch or another meal for another day.
- Serve up dinner in the kitchen and just put the salad bowl or veggies on the table. It reduces the temptation to keep on eating just because it's there! So if you make double quantity of a casserole (or if the recipe is for four and there's only two of you), immediately put half in the fridge for lunches or later in the week.
- Create from scraps by making the most of leftovers (start by storing them properly in airtight containers). It's amazing what you can do when you set your mind to throwing together a meal with bits of this and that from the fridge and whatever's in the pantry (pasta, low GI rice, some lentils or split peas).
- Minimise waste. The Big Shop is a bit of a trap and most of us, if we are honest, have to 'fess to throwing out greens that turned yellow. Shopping more often, making a rough weekly meal plan, writing a shopping list all help.
- Store food properly. It's estimated we trash around 15% of the food we buy because it spoils!

News Briefs

Low GI diet significantly helps people improve blood glucose control

The aim of diabetes management is to keep blood glucose levels as close as possible to the normal range (4–8 mmol/L, which translates to 65–110 mg/dL), to improve quality of life (and life expectancy) and reduce the risk of complications, heart attack and stroke.

A recent *Cochrane* [systematic review](#) that analysed 11 randomised controlled trials of either low GI or low glycemic load (GL) diets finds that following a low GI diet significantly helps people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes to improve their blood glucose control. In fact, the researchers found that HbA1c levels decreased by 0.5% with a low GI diet, and point out that the findings are significant both statistically and clinically. (HbA1c stands for glycated hemoglobin A1c, a measure which gives a picture of a person's blood glucose control over several weeks or months.)

Lead review author, Dr Diana Thomas, from the Center for Evidence-Based Pediatrics, Gastroenterology and Nutrition at the Children's Hospital at Westmead says: 'The 402 participants were adults in most studies; however, there were two studies in children, all of whom had type 1 diabetes. So, the results are relevant to both adults and children, with either

type 1 or type 2 diabetes.’

‘Now that the principles of eating low GI foods are clear,’ she said, ‘this way of eating should be incorporated into daily living.’ The point ‘is to lower the GI or GL of the diet, rather than to follow specific diet plans, which over the longer term can be very difficult to maintain,’ Thomas said.

What are Cochrane systematic reviews? The Cochrane Collaboration is an international not-for-profit organisation providing up-to-date information about the effects of health care. It was set up to collect and collate healthcare data independently and create transparent, systematic, unbiased reviews of the published medical literature on everything from drugs, through surgery, to dietary and community interventions. At the online Cochrane Library you will find its free plain language summaries and abstracts.

A growing concern: more gestational diabetes, more bigger babies

The percentage of babies born heavier than 4 kg (8.8 lbs) has risen from 10.9% in 1990 to 12.1% in 2005 in New South Wales (Australia), according to data collected from midwives and published in annual *Mothers And Babies* reports. Having a big baby can lead to delivery complications, increased likelihood of having a caesarian, and the baby is more likely to be overweight as a child and develop health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and fatty liver disease.

A major cause of bigger babies is gestational diabetes which affects almost 5% of pregnant women in ANZ, the US and the UK and is on the rise – it increased by 45% in New South Wales between 1995 and 2005. The main reason for the increase is maternal overweight/obesity. In any pregnancy, insulin resistance develops naturally as a pregnant woman’s insulin needs are 2–3 times her normal needs. If a woman is overweight during pregnancy, it’s worse. If her body cannot produce enough insulin to overcome the insulin resistance, her blood glucose levels increase above normal, placing the baby at risk of growing too big in the womb.

To provide simple dietary solutions that will help reduce the risk of ongoing health problems for mothers with gestational diabetes and their babies, an Australian research team including endocrinologist Dr Tania Markovic and Prof Jennie Brand-Miller have launched a 2-year study where they will monitor women with diabetes on low GI diets and measure their babies’ body fat as well as health.

Low-carb diets better at controlling type 2 diabetes said the headlines.

Dig a bit deeper ...

In a six-month comparison (funded by the Atkin’s Foundation) between a low-carb diet (based on Dr Robert Atkins’ books) and a low GI diet (based on Rick Gallop’s GI books), ‘patients who followed the no-glycemic diet (Atkins) experienced more frequent reductions, and in some cases elimination, of their need for medication to control type 2 diabetes,’ according to lead author Eric Westman, MD, of Duke University Medical Center. The findings are published online in [Nutrition and Metabolism](#). ‘Low glycemic diets are good, he said. ‘but our work shows a no-glycemic diet is even better at improving blood sugar control,’ he says.

In the study, 84 volunteers with type 2 diabetes were randomly assigned to either a low-carb ketogenic diet (less than 20 grams of carbs per day) or a high carb (55%), low-glycemic, reduced calorie diet. Both groups attended group meetings, had nutritional supplementation and an exercise regimen. The low-carbers were instructed to eat: ‘unlimited amounts of animal foods (meat, chicken, turkey, other fowl, fish, shellfish) and eggs; limited amounts of hard cheese (cheddar or Swiss, 4 ounces per day), fresh cheese (cottage or ricotta, 2 ounces per day), salad vegetables (2 cupfuls per day), and non-starchy vegetables (1 cupful per day). Participants were encouraged to drink at least 6 glasses of permitted fluids daily.’

According to the findings, of those who completed the study, the volunteers in the low-carb diet group had greater improvements in hemoglobin A1c. Diabetes medications were reduced or eliminated in 95% of the low-carbohydrate volunteers, compared to 62% in the low-glycemic group. The low-carb diet also resulted in a greater reduction in weight.

This is the story that hit the headlines around the world. If you read the paper itself (and don't just rely on the selected findings and quotes from the press release as many journalists did), you'll find that although it's a dietary study, there's virtually no information on the low GI diet at all. Many health professionals incorrectly assume that all high fibre foods are low GI food. In this study, the researchers don't say what the average GI was.

‘That’s a vital piece of missing information,’ says Dr Alan Barclay, Chief Scientific Officer of GI Limited. ‘A GI of 45 or less is a reasonable definition of a low GI diet or meal,’ he says. ‘This is because what we now know from numerous observational cohort studies around the world is that the average GI of the diet of people in the lowest quintile (20% of the population) is about 40–50. Similarly, in a recent meta-analysis of 15 experimental studies investigating the role of low GI diets in managing diabetes, the average GI was 45. Since this average GI has been proven to have significant health benefits in people with existing diabetes and in reducing the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes, and importantly, people can and do achieve it in real life, we believe a GI of 45 or less is what we all need to be aiming for.’

It wasn't all good news for the low carbers in the study either. ‘Bad’ LDL cholesterol went down in the low GI diet and rose on the Atkins diet and side effects like headaches, constipation and diarrhea were greater for the no-carbers. It had a significantly greater dropout rate too.

GI Group: Our position remains the same, whether the low carb option works for you and managing your blood glucose, or if you really enjoy your carbs (in sensible portions of course), you need to make sure it's the smart, low GI ones you include in your meals and for snacks.

Food of the Month with Catherine Saxelby

Culinary spices and herbs – a surprising source of antioxidants

Culinary spices and dried herbs are the latest ingredients to move into the nutrition spotlight. They are surprisingly rich in antioxidants and phyto-chemicals and are packed with vitamins and

minerals. With their hit of flavour they can help you cut back on excess salt or sugar in your cooking so are proving a winner with dietitians and nutritionists. Try this for yourself:

- Next time you cook a curry or laksa, don't add any salt. Use LOTS of chilli, turmeric, cumin seeds and ginger and I bet your taste buds will be so mesmerised by the burst of flavour, you won't notice the lack of salt.
- Another example: cook some cinnamon-infused pears in syrup with only half the usual sugar. Be generous with the cinnamon cassia. The aroma is enough to overcome that drop in sugar. You won't miss it.

ORAC antioxidant ranking In terms of antioxidants, spices and dried herbs are always at the top despite the differences in testing methods. For instance, when you look at the ORAC lab test, you'll see foods like cinnamon, cloves, pomegranate juice, blueberries, cranberries, oregano, chilli and turmeric listed as star performers. Dried herbs score higher than fresh for antioxidants as drying removes water and so concentrates the remaining leaves.

ORAC ([PDF](#)) stands for Oxygen Reducing Capacity and was developed by USDA and Tufts University. It is a well-recognised way to rank foods by their 'antioxidant strength'.

Seven super spices and dried herbs: The McCormick Science Institute (an independent research centre funded by McCormick and based in the US) has identified seven 'super spices' chosen due to their extremely high antioxidant score (based on ORAC) and the bank of other published scientific research behind them. In addition, these seven are the easiest to consume in higher quantities than usual which is important if you want to get a clinical benefit. They are:

- Cinnamon cassia – helps stabilise blood sugar after a meal
- Oregano – anti-bacterial with one of the highest antioxidant counts
- Turmeric – adds vivid yellow colour due to curcumin component; may delay dementia;
- Ginger – fights nausea; anti-inflammatory
- Thyme – traditional cough remedy, antiseptic and anti-inflammatory
- Paprika – similar properties to chilli; rich in beta-carotene
- Rosemary – one of the Big Three Mediterranean herbs and may help slow ageing

How much to use? Here's the big barrier with culinary spices. We only use a pinch here, a sprinkle there. According to the [McCormick Spice Institute](#), we probably need to be taking in 1/2 teaspoon per serving of a spice (or a combination of spices and herbs) to gain a health benefit and they are carrying out ongoing research in this area.

As an example, a recipe for home-made beef burgers can take 3 teaspoons of dried oregano leaves and 3 teaspoons of dried thyme leaves with the 500 g mince, along with the usual onion, tomato sauces, eggs, breadcrumbs and grated carrot. And importantly no added salt. This quantity makes 12 burger patties and tastes delicious. No suffering here.

Catherine Saxelby is an accredited dietitian and nutritionist and runs the Foodwatch Nutrition Centre. For more information on spices and herbs and healthy eating, visit www.foodwatch.com.au.

Tuck into the benefits of culinary spices and herbs

Dip into spice guru Ian ‘Herbie’ Hemphill’s books and discover the world of culinary spices and herbs and how you can include more of them in your meals.

- If you live in the US, Canada or the UK, check out: [The Spice and Herb Bible](#).
- If you live in Australia or New Zealand, check out: *Spice Notes & Recipes* or [Sticks, Seeds, Pods and Leaves: A cook’s guide to culinary spices and herbs](#) available from www.greatideas.net.au.

Low GI Recipes of the Month

American dietitian, **Johanna Burani** invites *GI News* readers to try recipes from her Italian kitchen (photographed by Sergio Burani).

Flourless chocolate hazelnut cake

This cake isn’t an Italian recipe at all, but it was a huge hit in my household over Christmas in Friuli. It is built around rich and nutty tasting ingredients that melt in your mouth. Empty-calorie, high GI white flour is replaced by fibre-rich, vitamin-and mineral-dense ground hazelnuts. The lasting mouth feel is the result of the primarily unsaturated fat in the nuts. This cake stands proudly on its own – no frosting or ice cream can add to its most satisfying taste. If you must, try just a slight dusting of powdered sugar on the top of the cake. Because of the amount of sugar, the GI will be moderate. Enjoy it for dessert when entertaining and special occasions like birthdays. It will feed a crowd. And if you are worried about the calories, just have a sliver instead of a slice!

Serves 12

3½ cups ground roasted hazelnuts (approx. 375 g/13 oz)

1½ cups sugar

2 tablespoons vanilla essence

¾ cup unsweetened cocoa (approx. 70 g/2½ oz)

12 egg whites

- Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Coat a spring-form pan with vegetable spray.
- Mix the hazelnuts, sugar, vanilla and cocoa in a medium sized bowl. Beat egg whites until stiff and dry. Gently fold them into the chocolate nut mixture.
- Pour the batter into the greased pan. Bake for 40–50 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool before serving.

Per slice (when cut into 12 slices)

Energy: 1402 kJ/ 334 cal; Protein 9 g; Fat 20 g (includes 2 g saturated fat and 0 mg cholesterol); Carbs 34 g; Fibre 5 g

Visit Johanna’s website: www.eatgoodcarbs.com.

UK dietitian **Azmina Govindji** shares recipes from her new book (with chef Sanjeev Kapoor) *Healthy Indian Cooking for Diabetes* photographed by Yuki Sugiura. It's available from bookshops in the UK, from [Amazon](#) and in ANZ online from [Great Ideas in Nutrition](#).

Gujurati yoghurt curry

(Gujarati kadhi)

Serve this kadhi or curry piping hot and mixed with steamed rice – basmati of course. [Jaggery](#) is an unrefined sugar sold in a block that's made from sugar cane. In Mexico and South America, it is known as panela. Use brown sugar as a substitute. Use a little crushed garlic instead of the asafoetida if you wish.

Serves 4



1 oz (25 g) gram flour (besan)
18 oz (500 g) low-fat plain yoghurt
1 tablespoon grated jaggery
2 green chillies, minced
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon olive oil
½ teaspoon black mustard seeds
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
8–10 curry leaves
2 dried red chillies, broken in half
3–4 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
Pinch asafoetida

Whisk together the besan and yoghurt until smooth. Add ¾ cups (800 mL) water, mix well then stir in the jiggery and green chillies. Cook on a low heat, stirring continuously until the curry reaches the right runny consistency. Add the salt.

Heat the oil in a small frying pan, then add the mustard and cumin seeds, curry leaves, dried red chillies, cloves, cinnamon and asafoetida. When the seeds begin to crackle, stir this mix into the curry.

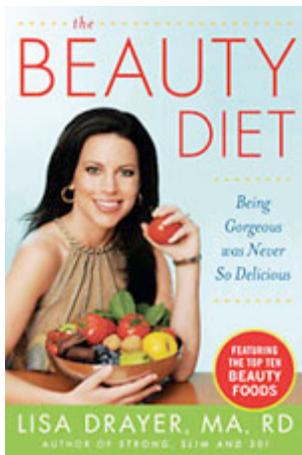
Per serve (without the rice)

Energy: 476 kJ/ 112 cal; Protein 8 g; Fat 3 g (includes 0.9 g saturated fat); Carbs 15 g; Fibre 0.7 g

Visit Azmina's website: www.govindjinnutrition.com

Beautiful soup, so rich and orange!

Editor's report: I loved this soup from Lisa Drayer's new *Beauty Diet* book which provides generous serves plus leftovers to freeze for another day. It's also packed with spices and, as Catherine says in this issue, they are a great source of antioxidants. We estimate this recipe will borderline low GI – orange-fleshed sweet potatoes are moderate GI (65) and carrots are low (41) and it is amazingly rich in fibre. It's available from bookshops and Amazon in the US and in ANZ from Great Ideas in Nutrition.



US nutritionist and dietitian, **Lisa Drayer** M.A., R.D., explains why sweet potato is one of her top 10 beauty foods in her new book, *The Beauty Diet* available from good bookshops and Amazon. 'Sweet potatoes are on my list of Top 10 Beauty Foods because of their big boost of beauty-enhancing beta-carotene, a fat soluble pigment found in many orange vegetables and fruits. It is a powerful antioxidant that protects our cells (including skin cells) against damage caused by free radicals. Additionally, the body converts beta-carotene to vitamin A, which helps keep your skin soft and smooth. My Beauty Diet includes all the nutrients you need for beautiful skin and avoids those problem foods that have too many high GI carbs, sugar, and poor-quality fats.'

Spicy carrot and sweet potato soup

4 servings (2 cups each)



1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
2 cups chopped onion
2 tablespoons chopped garlic
2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger
2 cinnamon sticks
2 teaspoons cumin seeds, crushed
2 teaspoons coriander seeds, crushed
¼ teaspoon hot red pepper (chilli) flakes
1 lb (450 g) carrots, peeled and chopped
2 lb (900 g) orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 x 14 oz (400 g) cans fat-free chicken broth (stock)
3 cups (750 mL) water
3 tablespoons peanut butter
¼ teaspoon salt (kosher or sea salt)
1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro (coriander), for garnish

- Heat the oil in a saucepan over medium heat and add the onion, garlic, ginger, cinnamon, cumin, coriander and red pepper (chilli) flakes. Sauté until tender, about 5 minutes, then add the carrots and sweet potatoes. Cook for 5 minutes and add the broth and water.
- Bring to a simmer and cook until the vegetables are just tender (about 25 minutes). Remove from the heat, lift out the cinnamon sticks with a slotted spoon and, using a hand blender, blend until slightly chunky. Stir in the peanut butter, season with salt if using and serve, garnishing each bowl with chopped cilantro.

Per serve (2 cups)

Energy: 1396 kJ/ 331 cal; Protein 9 g; Fat 10,5 g (includes 1.9 g saturated fat and 0 mg cholesterol); Carbs 54 g; Fibre 10 g

Busting Food Myths with Nicole Senior

***Myth:* Flaxseed oil is just as good as fish oil**

Fact: A client once told me she poured flaxseed oil over her breakfast cereal. My initial (private) thought was ‘yuck, that can’t taste good’, but I was also intrigued. A web-search on flaxseed oil advertisements yielded claims bordering on the miraculous. I felt relieved she wasn’t swigging it straight from the bottle! There’s a lot to the omega-3 story, but here’s a taste.

There are two types of omega-3 fatty acids: the long chain marine types (EPA, DHA, DPA), and the short chain plant type (ALA). Both the plant and marine type of omega-3 fatty acids are necessary for good health, and especially important for a healthy heart. It is recommended we consume around 2 g of short chain ALA (Alpha-Linolenic Acid) daily to reduce heart disease risk. Flaxseed oil (also called linseed oil) is one of the richest sources of ALA. One gram of flaxseed oil yields around 0.6 g of ALA. Some quick maths shows 3-4 g of flaxseed oil (less than a teaspoon) will give an optimal amount of ALA. Pouring it over cereal is a bit over the top.

If you prefer ALA in a tastier form, try a small handful of walnuts (30 g), it provides 3 g ALA – your entire day’s optimal amount, plus some change. Canola oil, mustard-seed oil, soybean oil, breads and cereals containing linseeds, and high-omega eggs also contain good amounts of ALA, while small amounts are present in a range of other foods such as soy beans, green leafy vegetables, oats and wheatgerm. The practical advantage of canola and soybean oils is you don’t need to keep them in the fridge. Flaxseed oil is very unstable and will go rancid (oxidise) quickly just left in the cupboard. For the same reason, don’t even think of cooking with flaxseed oil.

Both short chain and long chain omega-3 are needed, but when it comes to protection against dying from cardiovascular disease, it is the long chain omega-3s that have shown the most convincing benefit because of their potent anti-inflammatory and anti-arrhythmic effects (among others). Both the American Heart Association and the Heart Foundation (Australia) recommend people who have already had a heart attack, or currently have angina, need 1000 mg (1 g) of long chain omega-3s a day from food and/or supplements for further prevention. The rest of us should consume on average 500 mg (1/2 a gram) daily. You can get this from 2–3 small serves of oily fish per week, such as swordfish, salmon, sardines, herring and tuna (check your local recommendations on fish and mercury content). These long chain omega-3s are not found in flaxseed oil.

In the past it was believed the body could convert short chain ALA to the long chain forms, and the more ALA you consumed the more EPA and DHA your body would make (thus the flaxseed on the breakfast cereal I guess). Studies have since shown this elongation process is limited, inadequate, and varies widely between individuals. Conversion estimates vary from 0.1%–10%, and one third of the population are unable to convert any at all. We need to get the pre-formed long chain omega-3s as well as the short chain ALA. So, the long and the short of it is, I’m off to shallow fry some Atlantic salmon in canola oil, and I’ll be pouring low fat milk on my cereal tomorrow for breakfast. Bon appetit!

For more information about omega-3s, food sources, and high omega-3 recipes, grab a copy of

[Eat to Beat Cholesterol](#) by Nicole Senior and Veronica Cuskelly from Great Ideas in Nutrition and check out www.eattobeatcholesterol.com.au

Move It & Lose It with Prof Trim

Why weekends can be the worst enemy of weight loss

For many people (men in particular), the week's eating, exercise and lifestyle pattern is quite different to that on the weekend. Attitudes and behaviour tend to be a little more relaxed towards the end of the week with socialising and less constraint on over-indulgence. So does this matter in the grand scheme of things for weight loss?

According to a group of researchers from Washington University School of Medicine, it does. In a study published in [Obesity](#) they compared weight loss on a calorie restricted diet with that on a one year long exercise program with 48 healthy adults over one year. When they found less than expected weight losses in both groups, they couldn't understand why, as weight measured during the week seemed to be going in the right direction.

On closer examination, the researchers found that while weight decreased from Monday to Friday, it actually stayed stable on Saturday and Sunday to compensate for this in the calorie restricted (CR) group, and increased in the exercise group. It was shown that this was because the CR group increased their food intake on weekends, while the exercise group did less exercise on Sundays than any other day.

It should be a warning to those taking on a different persona from Friday to Sunday.

For more information on weight loss for men, check out [Professor Trim](#).

Curly Questions

If, say, one eats a high GI meal, how much lemon juice needs to be consumed to bring the reading down to low GI? I am not at all suggesting this as a way of life, but I want to understand how I can overcome a problem, if it comes up.

Research findings over the past decade have indicated that a realistic amount of lemon juice or vinegar just as a salad dressing eaten with a mixed meal has significant blood glucose lowering effects. For example, as little as 1 tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar in a vinaigrette dressing (with 2 teaspoons of oil) with an average meal lowered blood glucose by as much as 25-30%.

I have heard that Brewer's yeast is a good source vitamin B. What are the benefits? Are there any pitfalls I should be aware of? (I have reduced my blood glucose levels by losing a

considerable amount of weight.)

Dietitian Nicole Senior says: ‘Brewer’s yeast is simply a natural source of B vitamins, as well as some other nutrients. It is the dead yeast left over after brewing beer. It will have no adverse impact on your weight loss and blood glucose results. You could also source the nutrients you get from Brewer's yeast in yeast-extract spreads such as Vegemite or Marmite (acquired tastes and they are high in sodium). Brewer’s yeast also contains small amounts of other nutrients such as chromium (which may assist in blood glucose control), selenium, zinc, phosphorous and magnesium.’

Email your curly question about carbs, the GI and blood glucose to:

gicurlyquestions@gmail.com

Your Success Stories

‘Learning about the GI is just like learning to ride a bike or swim.’ – Jack

‘I am 74 years old and was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes 5 years ago. I have relatively good control. My A1C is in the low 7s. I purchased *The New Glucose Revolution* book in early 2008 (*The Low GI Handbook* is the title of the new Australian edition) and modified my eating regimen to more closely adhere to the lower GI foods. As a result I have been more consistent in my daily readings and my quarterly A1C levels have been more predictable and I no longer get lows. I exercise 3–4 days per week with a 4-mile (6.4 km) speed walking program trying to keep myself to 13–14 minutes per mile and find the agony of getting started and finishing is easier now because I have more energy. The changes have helped my daily exercise program and routines as I am not as sluggish after the morning’s efforts. My appetite is still vigorous but I do not crave eating as I did after exercising before I started the GI awareness in my eating. I also do not get the hunger pangs a couple of hours after my meals when I felt so full when I left the table. I do not consider myself on a diet, merely eating smarter. Learning about the GI is like learning to swim and once you are doing it, eating the low GI way takes no real thinking – you are not depriving yourself of anything.’

Robert updates his weightloss and fitness success story

In September 2008 we reported on Robert’s 25 kg (55 lbs) weightloss on *The Low GI Diet*. When he started the diet he had two goals: to lose 20 kg (44 lbs) by 6 November 2008 (he lost 20 kg in 18 weeks) and to run a competitive 400 m (1/4 mile) at the Sydney International Athletics Centre in November 2008. Here’s what happened:

‘Whilst a September 2008 calf strain to the left leg pushed goal 2 into 2009, I did compete on Saturday 13 December 2008 for the first time in 39 years in a track and field competition. The event was the over 35 years high jump and I cleared the bar at 1.25 m. I was the oldest in the group and my competitors were clearing 1.30 m and 1.35 m. The goals for 2009 are now to clear 1.30 m, to run the 400 m, and possibly run an 800 m in early 2009.’ – Robert

The GI Symbol Program and GI Testing

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