

Pastor’s Corner – 12/14/2019 – Food for Weirdos

So, you’ve heard about this low-carb diet stuff and figure it’s for weirdos, dietary extremists, and nutritional rebels and decided it’s just not for you. While I can certainly appreciate a healthy dose of skepticism when it comes to nutritional science (most of it is pure junk), I think it might be time for even the skeptics to take a second look at a key pillar found in all low-carb diet plans – the importance of severely restricting sugar and greatly reducing processed grains from our diets.

While the high fat portion of low carb diets is still not widely accepted, more and more nutrition scientists are getting on board with cutting back on foods that chronically elevate blood sugar and insulin.

Take for instance the following consensus statement from the American Diabetes Association (emphasis? emphases? – mine):

EATING PATTERNS

Consensus recommendations

A variety of eating patterns (combinations of different foods or food groups) are acceptable for the management of diabetes.

Until the evidence surrounding comparative benefits of different eating patterns in specific individuals strengthens, health care providers should focus on the key factors that are common among the patterns:

- **Emphasize nonstarchy vegetables.**
- **Minimize added sugars and refined grains.**
- **Choose whole foods over highly processed foods to the extent possible.**

Reducing overall carbohydrate intake for individuals with diabetes has demonstrated the most evidence for improving glycemia and may be applied in a variety of eating patterns that meet individual needs and preferences. For select adults with type 2 diabetes not meeting glycemic targets or where reducing antiglycemic medications is a priority, reducing overall carbohydrate intake with low- or very low-carbohydrate eating plans is a viable approach.

Low carb isn’t fringe anymore when the ADA begins to promote it as the diet that has been demonstrated to have the most evidence for improving blood sugar.

Whether you’re diabetic or not – almost everyone would benefit from scaling back on the foods that cause our blood sugar to surge. So, what are some simple changes you can make to lower your intake of these insulinogenic foods (i.e. the foods that cause the biggest rise in blood sugar)? What kinds of foods should you eat, and which are best avoided? Enter the glycemic index.

A healthy breakfast: cereals, toast, fruit juice?			
Food item	Serving size in g/ml		How does each food effect blood glucose compared with one 4g teaspoon of table sugar?
Bran flakes	30	3.7	
Milk	125	1	
Brown toast, 1 slice	30	3	
Pure Apple juice	200	8.6	

Cereal	Glycaemic Index	Serve size		How does each cereal effect blood glucose compared to 4g teaspoons of table sugar?
Coco Pops	77	30g	7.3	
Cornflakes	93	30g	8.4	
Mini Wheats	59	30g	4.4	
Shredded Wheat	67	30g	4.8	
Special K	54	30g	4.0	
Bran Flakes	74	30g	4.8	
Oat porridge	63	150ml	4.4	

In brief, the glycemic index ranks foods based on how much that food spikes blood sugar. These foods are rated on a scale from 0-100 with table sugar sitting at the top with a score of 100. The glycemic index is kind of hard to manage from a practical perspective so I've included the following info-graphics which give sugar equivalents for many common foods. Eating these foods in the amounts shown will raise your blood sugar the same amount as eating the representative amount of straight up table sugar.

As we continue to roll into the holiday season it's a time for treats and goodies. Almost nobody (except for those extremists and wackos) are going to stay low-carb during the holidays (not even me). But it's not a bad idea to cut back where you can and I hope the info-graphics help with that. Of course, if you do indulge in too many sweets this year, you can always counteract some of those poor choices by fasting (see last week's Pastor's Corner). And hey, that's what New Year's Resolutions are for anyway, right?

Happy Sabbath
Pastor Tyler

Type of fruit	GI from scientific literature	Serve size (g)	Glycaemic load (g/serve)	How does 120g of each fruit affect blood glucose compared to 4g teaspoons of table sugar?
Banana	62	120	16	5.9
Grapes, black,	59	120	11	4.0
Apple, Golden Delicious	39	120	6	2.2
Watermelon, fresh	80	120	5	1.8
Nectarines, fresh	43	120	4	1.5
Apricots, fresh	34	120	3	1.1
Strawberries, fresh	40	120	3.8	1.4

Food Item	Glycaemic index	Serve size g	How does each food affect blood glucose compared with one 4g teaspoon of table sugar?
Basmati rice	69	150	10.1
Potato, white, boiled	96	150	9.1
French fries, boiled	64	150	7.5
Spaghetti, White, boiled	39	180	6.6
Sweet corn, boiled	60	80	4.0
Prosope peas, boiled	51	80	1.3
Peas	62	120	5.7
Apple	39	120	2.3
Wholemeal bread	74	30	3.0
Broccoli	15	80	0.2
Eggs	0	60	0

Other foods in the very low glycaemic range would be chicken, oily fish, almonds, mushrooms, cheese