

- Low-carbohydrate diet / Diabetes

Switch to healthier low GI diet to control spikes in blood sugar level

DT Next · 7 Dec 2021 · 2 · Dr S Nallaperumal, Consultant Diabetologist, Prashanth Hospitals

The importance of healthy food habits cannot be undermined. Avoiding junk foods, processed foods, aerated drinks, refined carbs, processed meats etc. are critical. All the natural food groups like fruits and vegetables, pulses, legumes, nuts, dairy, eggs and lean meat especially ones rich in nutrients and fibres are the most health-friendly and contribute to healthy low glycaemic diets.

A staggering 77 million people in India are reportedly diabetic. Like many others, people are probably living with a relative or acquainted with a colleague or friend who is diabetic. No wonder India is called the diabetic capital of the world and Chennai and other metros in south India are the key contributors. Non-communicable diseases like diabetes and hypertension are largely lifestyle dependent and you could keep them at bay by adopting a healthy and active lifestyle – healthy eating habits, getting adequate sleep and regular exercise.

People can easily adapt to a healthier lifestyle by changing over to a low glycaemic index diet that has a direct impact on controlling spikes in blood sugar levels. Low glycaemic carbs produce a slower, steadier, and lower rise in blood sugar, and the fibre in these foods helps you feel full and satiated longer. Low glycaemic foods help to regulate blood sugar levels and over time are beneficial in preventing weight gain and chronic lifestyle disorders like Type 2 diabetes. There are simple ways to modify your diet to low GI foods, e.g., swapping potatoes with sweet potatoes and replacing white bread with multigrain bread. A meal plan that is rich in legumes like beans and chickpeas and has complex carbohydrates like brown rice and millets instead of polished white rice and is high in fruits and vegetables like carrots, cauliflower etc. in moderate quantities can comprise a healthy low GI diet.

An easy option when it comes to sugar is to replace the regular white sugar with clinically proven low GI sweeteners. Traditionally known to control spikes in blood sugar level, low GI sweeteners can be a healthy, tasty alternative for regular sugar.