

Modified Mediterranean Diet Carb Management & The Glycemic Index

The Mediterranean Diet allows for grains 3 times a day. In the Modified version, the individual requires less carbohydrates and more of a focus on low glycemic foods due to their genetic profile, inflammatory markers, weight, or other digestive system concerns.

Modified Carb Intake

Sugar or too much of any food that turns quickly to sugar will create a wide-range of health problems. The higher a carbohydrate is on the glycemic index, the quicker it turns into sugar and the greater likelihood of harm.

High glycemic, processed grains and refined sugars cause elevated glucose, which in turn elevates insulin, leading to premature aging and degenerative disease (type 2 diabetes, heart disease, inflammation of the arteries, and cancer).

Sugar is well known to be hidden in everything. Soft drinks, candy, and desserts are the clear culprits, but less obvious sources include: lunch meats, pizza, sauces, breads, soups, crackers, fruit drinks, canned foods, yogurt, ketchup, and mayonnaise.

***On the Modified Mediterranean diet, eat one moderate glycemic carb per day and look to avoid high glycemic carbs. The ideal time for a moderate (or high) glycemic carb is the morning – you have the day to burn the sugars – or for recovery after very strenuous exercise.**

Glycemic Index

High Glycemic: Along with sugar, bread, white rice, potatoes, and pastas may not contain sugar, but quickly turn into sugar in your body.

Moderate Glycemic: Whole grains, like oats and brown rice, and sweet potatoes turn to sugar too, so they should also be moderated.

- **Fruit and root vegetables are Moderate Glycemic:** These contains sugar, but contain fiber and helpful nutrition as well. It is best to avoid sugary fruits and stick to low-glycemic, low sugar choices.

Low Glycemic: Vegetables and fruits like berries and Granny-Smith apples cause little to no spike in blood sugar and are effective then in managing inflammation.

Sweeteners:

Bad: While not impacting blood sugar like glucose, artificial sweeteners like sucralose, aspartame, and saccharine are all laboratory chemicals, unhealthy, and not been found to improve weight and inflammation.

Good: The herb stevia is the preferred alternative sweetener and does not raise blood sugar. The type of Xylitol that comes from Birch is an acceptable alternative to

sugar and works well for cooking.

Natural: Sweeteners like raw honey and maple syrup will also raise blood sugar so should be used in moderation.

Four Anti-inflammatory Rules For Carbs

1. **Lower-Glycemic Carbohydrates.** Focus on these foods all day
2. **Moderate-Glycemic Carbohydrates.** Lower consumption in the afternoon and evening and eliminate for weight loss.
3. **High-Glycemic Carbohydrates.** Use only in recovering from exercise and also eliminate for weight loss.
4. **Eliminate Refined Carbohydrates**

Carbohydrate Foods

Low-Glycemic Carbohydrates (Best for managing inflammation)

- **Vegetables**— Arugula, Asparagus, Bamboo Shoots, Bean Sprouts, Bell Peppers (*red, yellow, green*), Broad beans, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Cassava, Cauliflower, Chives, Celery, Chayote Fruit, Chicory, Coriander, Collard greens, Cucumber, Eggplant, Endive, Green Beans, Hearts of Palm, Jalapeno Peppers, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Onions, Radishes, Radicchio, Snap Beans, Snow Peas, Shallots, Spinach, Spaghetti Squash, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, Turnip Greens, Watercress, Zucchini
- **Fruits** --- Berries (blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, elderberries, gooseberries, loganberries, raspberries, strawberries), Limes, Granny Smith Apples, Tomatoes
- **Grain-free carbohydrate replacements:** Flax seed bread, muffins, and crackers
Almond flour cookies

Moderate-Glycemic Carbohydrates

Vegetables: Leeks, Okra, Pumpkin Artichokes, Acorn Squash, Turnip

Root Vegetables: Carrots and Beets

Starches: Sweet Potato or Yam

Legumes: Beans, Peas, Lentils, & Peanuts

Whole Grains: Barley, Brown Rice, Amaranth, Quinoa, Buckwheat (kasha), Bulgar (Tabouli), Millet, Rye, Steel Cut Oats, Semolina, Tapioca

Fruits: Cherries, Pear, Apricot, Banana, Melons, Orange, Peach, Plum, Grapefruit, Prunes, Apples, Lemons, Limes, Nectarines, Tangerines, Passion Fruit, Persimmons, Pomegranate, Papaya, Mango

High Glycemic Carbs

- **Fruits and sweeteners:** Dates, Kiwi, *Watermelon, Honey, Fruit juice
- **Starches:** Potatoes, Pumpkin, Parsnips
- **Grains:** Corn, Bagels, Baguettes, Processed Breads, Pastas, and Snacks: Chips, Pretzels, and Crackers

*Watermelon is mostly water and has a low glycemic load in a serving

Additional Well Aligned Resources

The Carb Counter

A Chart of Lower-Glycemic Index Carbohydrate Sources

Below, you will see a list of low-glycemic carbs and how many grams of carbohydrates they have per serving.

It's important to note that in counting carbs, you can subtract "total fiber" from "total carbohydrates." For example, a cup of blackberries has seven "net carbs" thanks to its 8 grams of fiber.

Because managing your carbs will be integral to your lifestyle whether you're on the plan, this is an important table:

Food	Serving Size	Total Carbohydrates	Total Fiber
Fruit			
Apples (with skin)	1 medium-sized apple	25	4
Asian Pears	1 whole medium fruit	13	4
Avocado (California)	1 whole, without skin	12	9
Bananas	Medium (7-8" long)	27	3
Blackberries	1 cup	15	8
Blueberries	1 cup	21	4
Dates (Deglet Nour)	1 cup chopped	110	12
Grapefruit	Full fruit (6-8" diameter)	26	4
Grapes	1 cup	16	1
Honeydew melon	1 cup balled	16	1
Kiwis	1 cup	26	5
Lemons	1 fruit	8	2
Limes	1 lime	7	2
Mangoes	1 cup sliced	28	3
Melon (Cantaloupe)	1 cup balled	16	2
Oranges (Florida)	1 large whole fruit	17	4
Peach	1 large whole	17	3



Pineapple	1 cup, chunked	22	2
Plums	1 fruit	8	1
Pomegranate	1 fruit	53	11
Red cherries	1 cup, without pits	19	2
Strawberries	1 cup whole strawberries	11	3
Tomato	1 large whole	7	2
Watermelon	1 cup balled	12	1
Vegetables			
Artichokes (boiled and prepared)	1 medium artichoke	14	10
Arugula	1 cup, uncooked leaves	1	0
Banana peppers	1 medium whole pepper	2	2