



# **Count Your Nutrition - Not Just Your Calories!**

## **The Basics of Low Glycemic Eating to End Yoyo Dieting for Good!**

*By Holly Stokes, NLP Coach, "The Brain Trainer"*

Counting calories is fine for those who love all those numbers running through their head all day. Counting calories may tell you what amount of energy is in a food, but it says nothing about the **quality** of foods you are eating. I've recently been seeing the 100 calorie snack packs. Only 100 calories, but full of sugars, processed foods, and preservatives. There's nothing healthy about them!

**The problem with weight loss programs based on calories: they don't account for the quality of foods you are eating.** And once the weight is gone, you return to old habits and food choices, and it all comes right back, with even more fat to boot!

**Stop Counting Calories – Just Eat Better!** If you are ready to stop the dieting yoyo, and create a few simple changes by replacing unhealthy foods with some easy alternatives, read on! When you focus on health and nutrition, the benefit is weight loss, as your body gets the nutrition it needs, it drops the extra pounds. It doesn't have to be hard, you don't have to go hungry or feel deprived or weak, all you need is a few simple substitutions.

**Beware of Big White Five! White sugar, white flour, white rice, potatoes, and popcorn.** These are the number one instigators of extra weight. First let's discover why they are bad for your body, and then we'll look at what you can do instead.

**White sugar** is refined and processed sugar from the cane plant. The main problem with sugar is that it's in everything! I picked up some Organic Butternut Squash Soup, and as I was eating it, it tasted sweet to me. I looked at the label, and sure enough, they had added sugar to my soup! Just because it's organic, doesn't mean it's healthy!

**Why is sugar bad?** Well, a little is fine, the problem is that manufacturers keep adding more because we are all accustomed to the super sweet tastes. The other problem, is that when we eat high sugar foods, it turns to glucose ( the sugar our body operates on) very quickly, which causes a spike in our blood sugar. The spike in our blood sugar then signals the pancrease to release insulin (which carries the sugar molecule into the body's tissues). Once this happens, there is more sugar in the tissues than we can use, so what does the body do? It stores it for later – as fat!

Not only does this high sugar intake cause us to store more fat, but it can also lead to all sorts of health challenges including insulin resistance, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and even cancer has been linked to high sugar levels. In fact, recent advancements in technology have created machines where you can see the glucose use in the body.



Areas in the body that are using too much glucose are identified as cancer cells. Let's not wait to get cancer, let's stop eating so much sugar!

**Not all sugars are equal, there are many good substitutes** (I'm not talking about chemical compounds such as aspartame and sucralose). It's never been found that diet drinks help you lose weight. There are some all natural wonderful sweeteners that are much better for your body. Here's my top all-natural choices:

- **Agave syrup** (low glycemic all-natural sweetener made from the agave plant)
- **Stevia** – this is a super sweetener made from a plant in South America. Because it is super sweet, you only need a pinch. Some people notice an after taste, so try it out and see if you like it.
- **Licorice root-** made from a plant, a wonderful sweetener with possible health benefits. It can have a slightly licorice taste to it.
- **Raw Honey-** raw honey is actually medium on the glycemic scale. Pasteurized honey (because of the heating process is higher glycemic).

**White flour** is the next one to watch for. It's made from wheat, they grind the wheat kernels, polish off the bran, the wheat germ, and the hull. What is left is pure starch. When we eat white flour products, breads, pasta, crackers, the refined flour turns to glucose (sugar) in the body quickly, which signals the pancreas to release a spike of insulin, and then causing the body to store fat. An indicator of how quickly the body turns foods to glucose is called the Glycemic Index, and it is already appearing on food labels.

**White rice**, much like wheat has been processed and polished, removing the fiber and bran, and what is left is just starch. This again causes the same pathway of spiking the blood sugar, spiking insulin levels, and causing the body to store fat. Skip the white rice, brown rice is better, but still higher on the glycemic index, wild rice is an even better choice, and here are a couple more less well-known great grains that you cook up much like you would cook rice! 1 part grain to 2 parts water.

- Quinoa – a tiny grain from South America, very high protein and low on the glycemic scale, it only takes about 15 min. to cook.
- Buckwheat – this is a grain, actually not related to wheat so it doesn't have gluten protein. Takes about 20-30 min to cook, add a bit of seasoning as it is a little bland.

**An easy general rule: the more refined and processed the food, the higher the glycemic index.** So, go for the whole grain foods, whole wheat bread, wheat pasta, and other whole grains. To get yourself used to the taste, start buying partial wheat, or mix white and wheat together, or experiment with making your own. My sister who is a big do it your-selfer says that grinding white wheat kernels instead of the red winter wheat kernels makes all the difference in flavor and taste for her home ground flour.



**Potatoes are all starch.** High on the glycemic index, these little starch pods can spike your blood sugar and set off that sequence of insulin and storing fat. That's one reason that many people found benefit in the Atkins diet, they were cutting out the white flour and starches. Where did it go wrong? People weren't getting the fiber they needed to keep their colon clean and working well.

Instead of white potatoes, try yams and sweet potatoes both have higher fiber and don't impact your body the same way. Other good substitutes that can give you that creamy texture are squashes, (I especially love mashed butternut squash), and there's a great recipe for mashed cauliflower.

**Popcorn.** Who knew that something so low in calories was so high on the glycemic index? Yes, unfortunately, popcorn has one of the highest glycemic indexes. Well, there aren't any great substitutes for popcorn, it's kind of in a category of its own. I still eat popcorn, but only once in a while, and I am aware that it has the same effect on my body as cake or cookies. So, if you are eating popcorn as a low calorie snack, you might rethink its place in your life, and have it only as an occasional treat, like you would sweets. Just be aware that eating popcorn spikes your blood sugar with a Glycemic Index of 72!

**When you focus on healthy choices, and nutrition, your body can let go of the extra weight** and you'll slim down to your ideal weight. You don't have to feel deprived, hungry or weak, and in fact all of my clients have felt more mentally clear, stabilized mood, and energy that lasts all day when they follow the glycemic index eating plan. Basically, it's eating foods that the human body has used for fuel for thousands of years: **Whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean meats, nuts and seeds!**

**It's Time to be eating better,** and when you do, your taste buds even begin to prefer the healthier choices! It's only been in the last 50-100 years that our diets have been so messed up, and we are seeing so many health effects now from poor diet choices.

**How to Get Started: You may be motivated to make some diet changes now,** and it's a good idea to focus on adding in the foods that you love. Take a sheet of paper and write a list of what you normally eat, check it with those things in this article, write out a substitution. I also like to have my clients focus on the healthy foods they love, like your favorite fruits and vegetables. Add in some of your best healthy indulgences while you are making changes. I love mangos, avocados, peaches, artichokes, broccoli, and asparagus just to name a few. It's also a good idea to keep an open mind, and try out a new fruit or vegetable every week. Variety is the spice of life! *And play with your spices too!*

**We may be motivated, but sometimes our old habits get in the way.** Changing habits can be the most difficult part of eating healthier. Many times it's as if part of us wants to change, and part of us doesn't. This inner struggle is responsible for self-sabotage, craving the wrong foods, eating for comfort, eating when stressed, or a whole



bunch of other difficulties that can throw us off track. A lot of times, we might think, “If only I were more disciplined, I could make myself do it. I like to focus on building the motivation of my clients to make the changes they want. Because of this, I’ve created a couple of tools for my clients that you might find helpful in breaking old habits and making healthy life choices easier than ever!

- **[The Lighten Up Mind Body Weight Loss Audio Course](#)** makes changing your old food habits easier than ever! The CD series helps train your brain to create new habits in how you think and feel about food, and to begin preferring healthy choices. The workbook brings together some of the best planning tools and strategies for making new habits, such as creating your one week menu, your healthy shopping list, and more. Plus, when you bring together a group of family or friends to go through the course with you, it can be a great support for staying on track and moving forward, see support groups on the website.
- **[The Information Report: Change your Habits, Cravings, and Even Addictions: NLP Tools to help you Train your Brain to get the results you want!](#)** This power packed 25+ page report will help you understand your habits and triggers, offers essential NLP tools for addressing your habits, create internal alignment with what you want, allowing you to reduce the struggle, and making change easier than ever!

*Here’s to your Health – Holly Stokes, M. NLP Coach, C.Ht.*

*Holly Stokes, “The Brain Trainer”, Master NLP Health Practitioner, and Certified Hypnotherapist, lives in the Pacific Northwest, helping clients change habits, patterns and even “past programs” that get in the way of success in both their personal and professional lives. Visit the website for free downloads, articles and more at: [www.LightenUp.me](http://www.LightenUp.me) (Weight Loss and Wellness site) and [www.ExpandingPotentials.net](http://www.ExpandingPotentials.net) (main site).*

References:

- *Releasing Fat* by Ray D. Strand, M.D.
- *Dare to Lose: 4 Simple Steps to a Better Body* by Shari Lieberman, PhD, CNS, FACN