

# **JIM C – HEALTH TERMS**

## **MONDAY - 09/21/2009**

**The Glycemic Index is useful to help control your weight and diet, but it is imperative for anyone with diabetes or hyperglycemia.**

### **HOW DID THE TERM “*GLYCEMIC INDEX*” ORIGINATE?**

***Definition:* A numerical index given to a carbohydrate-rich food that is based on the average increase in blood glucose levels occurring after the food is eaten.**

**GI values do not define carbohydrates by their chemical structure (as in “simple” or “complex”) but rather by what those foods do to blood glucose levels in the body (quick versus slow glucose release).**

- *Before 1981* - all patients diagnosed with diabetes were given dietary exchanges, which were formulated for all food groups.**
- *1981* - Dr. David Jenkins, University of Toronto professor of nutrition, developed the concept of the glycemic index to explain the way in which dietary carbohydrates impacts blood sugar**
- *Early 1990s* – Eating complex carbohydrates like starches was not believed to grossly interfere with good blood glucose control.**
- *2000s* – GI applies only to foods with a reasonable carbohydrate content; Low = 55 or less; Medium GI 56 – 69; High 70 +**

**Conventional Wisdom: Glycemic Index = Measure of blood sugar**

**Moment of Zen: Not all carbohydrate foods are created equal**