

Low Glycemic Happiness: 120 Custom-Crafted Low Glycemic Load Recipes for Health and Happiness

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Diabetes Manager (Mar 6, 2014)

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This handy cookbook illustrates how low glycemic does not have to mean low taste or low happiness.

Health reporter, editor, and diabetic Dr. Maury Breecher and co-author Judy Lickus have written *Low Glycemic Happiness*—a cookbook for those labeled prediabetic, or for diabetics who wish to manage their condition (with a physician's guidance) through dietary change. The book is particularly well suited for beginning cooks who appreciate shortcuts without sacrificing taste. The authors' belief that eating low glycemic load foods "supports your highest levels of health and happiness" may hold crossover appeal for audiences intrigued by holistic wellness.

The book cites the obesity epidemic in America, Breecher's own journey toward a healthier lifestyle, and studies on the effects of high GL and low GL foods to make a sensible case for eating more frequent, properly portioned meals that help maintain glucose levels. This, in turn, can have an impact on energy and mood. Without hyping the low-carb trend as a cure-all, the authors provide an informative, but not exhaustive, rationale for shifting habits. More than one hundred easy selections—each labeled with a glycemic index number and a glycemic load score—span chapters on breakfast, lunch, dinner, side dishes, and snacks.

A straightforward black-and-white layout excludes photographs, sidebars, tips, and other frequent cookbook extras, allowing the emphasis to remain firmly on the dishes. Many recipes tend toward American clubhouse favorites (Waldorf Salad, Baked Chicken Parmesan, Crab Cake Monterey), with a handful of more international selections (Asian-inspired stir-fries, baba ghanoush) providing welcome variety.

For those seeking to minimize time in the kitchen, numerous recipes employ specific brands, including Blue Diamond Almond Breeze, Newman's Own teriyaki marinade, and Campbell's soups. Substitutions should pose minimal problems for culinary enthusiasts who prefer homemade, lower-sodium alternatives. A few items, such as Bragg Liquid Aminos, may be less familiar. The book also emphasizes simple preparations. Breakfast ideas include smoothies and several one-skillet meals. The chapter on snacks lists basic items, such as produce and Snickers energy bars, rather than original recipes. Lunches and dinners often feature quick items such as chicken breasts and a particularly wide range of seafood. Adding the total cooking time near the top of the recipes would be a helpful addition.

Of special note are the appendices, which provide further background on glycemic loads, metabolic syndrome, and related research, along with a guide for learning to calculate GL and GI numbers. With a style that emphasizes self-empowerment—"Be gentle with yourself and take time to enjoy each step along the way"—this book is a useful stepping stone for the new cook.

KAREN RIGBY (June 3, 2014)

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