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Media Release

Diabetics advised to have some bananas

Sweet tasting, high in natural sugars and low in GI, bananas are now highly recommended for diabetics by health experts.

With nearly one million Australians diagnosed with diabetes, and one in four adult Australians having impaired blood sugar metabolisms, choosing low GI foods can make a huge difference to the health of many Australians. This where our nation's most popular fruit, bananas, help out.

According to Accredited Nutritionist Glenn Cardwell, "Bananas are great for people with diabetes and for general health."

"Bananas have often been caught up in the common misconception that if it tastes good it must be bad. It still concerns me that some people think that eating bananas might raise their blood sugar levels too high, but this is not the case," Cardwell says.

Cardwell recommends that in order to keep blood sugar levels healthy, "It is important to eat foods that digest slowly to avoid any spikes in blood sugar. Those foods that have the least effect on raising blood glucose are called Low Glycemic Index foods, or low GI for short. Many natural foods have a low GI, such as oats, legumes, milk and peanuts. Bananas are also a low GI food despite tasting sweet."

Diabetes Australia, celebrating National Diabetes Week 8th – 14th July supports this view, stating on their website "Carbohydrate foods are the best energy source for your body" and list bananas as a low GI food.

These sugars make bananas a natural energy source for working muscles and the brain. That's why the banana is popular with athletes and office workers wanting to kick off the mid afternoon energy slump.

Cardwell comments, "There is some confusion with people thinking they will get a 'sugar high' from fruit. The average GI of a ripe banana is 52, which is classified as low GI, making them a good fruit choice for diabetics."

"As the banana is digested and absorbed slowly, it also helps explain why the banana is so filling, helping people to avoid over-eating," says Cardwell.

So, fat-free and a great source of vitamin B6, folate, potassium, fibre, the banana's health benefits extend way beyond its low GI and is the key to good health to make your body sing.

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