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*In a recent study of adults over 50 years old, those with a high glycemic load diet had a significantly increased risk of age-related hearing loss.*

## HIGH GLYCEMIC LOAD DIETS INCREASE RISK OF AGE-RELATED HEARING LOSS

**A**ge-related hearing loss is a common disability in older adults, and nutrition may play a role in the development of this condition. Carbohydrate nutrition is thought to possibly relate to age-related hearing loss.

In a recent issue of the *Journal of Nutrition*, researchers sought to determine the association between glycemic index (GI) and glycemic load (GL) and age-related hearing loss. Hearing loss was measured in 2956 participants aged 50 years or older enrolled in the Blue Mountains Hearing Study. Food frequency questionnaires were used to document intakes of carbohydrates, sugar, starch, cereal and total fiber. Australian GI values were used to calculate average GI and GL values of the diets.

A higher average dietary GI was associated with a 59% increased prevalence of any hearing loss. Participants in the highest 25% of average dietary GL intake compared with those in the lowest 25% had a 76% greater risk of developing hearing loss. Higher carbohydrate and sugar intakes were also associated with occurrence of hearing loss.

In this study group, a high-GL diet was a predictor of hearing loss, as was higher intake of total carbohydrates. It is possible that prolonged high blood glucose levels after a meal may be an underlying biological mechanism in the development of age-related hearing loss.

*Gopinath B, et al. Dietary Glycemic Load Is a Predictor of Age-Related Hearing Loss in Older Adults. 2010. J Nutr 140(12):2207-12.*