

Vietnamese Prawn and Pink Grapefruit Noodle Salad

A vibrant low-GI Vietnamese salad featuring tender prawns, citrus grapefruit, and portion-controlled rice noodles in a balanced sweet-sour dressing that won't spike blood sugar.

Prep: 25 min

Cook: 10 min

Total: 35 min

Servings: 6

GL 19.5 / GI 53

Ingredients

Medium GI when cold; portion control important thin rice vermicelli noodles

cherry tomatoes, halved

fish sauce

From 1 lime; vitamin C aids glucose metabolism fresh lime juice

Minimal amount; consider coconut sugar for lower GI palm sugar or soft brown sugar

Capsaicin may improve insulin sensitivity large red chilli, divided

Low GI citrus; contains naringenin for blood sugar control pink grapefruits, segmented

Very low GI; high water content cucumber, peeled, deseeded and thinly sliced

Raw carrots have lower GI than cooked carrots, cut into matchsticks

spring onions, thinly sliced

High protein slows carb absorption; zero GI cooked large prawns

May enhance insulin function fresh mint leaves

Contains compounds that support glucose metabolism fresh coriander leaves

Instructions

Step 1

Place the rice vermicelli noodles in a large heatproof bowl and break them into shorter lengths with your hands. Pour boiling water over the noodles until completely submerged and let stand for 10 minutes until the noodles are tender and pliable. Use exactly 200g dry noodles to ensure proper portion control for blood sugar management.

Step 2

While the noodles soak, prepare your vegetables. Halve the cherry tomatoes, peel and deseed the cucumber before slicing thinly, cut the carrots into thin matchsticks, slice the spring onions, and segment the pink grapefruits by cutting away all pith and membrane to release clean citrus segments. Pat the cooked prawns dry with paper towels if needed.

Step 3

Drain the softened noodles thoroughly in a colander and rinse under cold running water to stop the cooking process and remove excess starch. This cooling step is crucial for lowering the glycemic impact by creating resistant starch, which acts more like fiber than regular carbohydrate. Let the noodles drain completely for 2 to 3 minutes, then refrigerate for at least 15 minutes if time permits for maximum resistant starch formation.

Step 4

In the same large bowl, add the halved cherry tomatoes and gently crush them using the back of a spoon or a muddler to release their juices. Dice half of the red chilli and add it to the bowl along with the fish sauce, fresh lime juice, and sugar. Stir vigorously until the sugar dissolves completely. Remember, this minimal amount of sugar equals only one-third teaspoon per serving, keeping the glycemic load low.

Step 5

Taste the dressing and adjust the balance of flavors as needed—it should be harmoniously sweet, sour, salty, and spicy. Add more lime juice for tartness, fish sauce for saltiness, or a tiny pinch more sugar if too sharp. For zero glycemic impact, substitute the brown sugar with erythritol or monk fruit sweetener in equal amounts. Remember that minimal sugar keeps this dish blood sugar friendly.

Step 6

Add the cooled noodles to the dressing bowl and toss thoroughly to coat every strand. Then add the grapefruit segments, sliced cucumber, carrot matchsticks, spring onions, and cooked prawns. Tear the mint and coriander leaves and add them to the bowl, reserving a few whole leaves for garnish. The herbs contain compounds that may enhance insulin sensitivity.

Step 7

Season the salad with a pinch of salt if needed and toss everything together gently but thoroughly, ensuring the dressing coats all ingredients evenly. Divide the noodle salad among six serving bowls or plates, ensuring each portion contains approximately 1 cup of noodles mixed with vegetables and prawns. Garnish with the remaining sliced chilli and reserved herbs, and serve immediately at room temperature for optimal flavor and glycemic benefit. For best blood sugar control, eat the prawns and vegetables first, then finish with the noodles.