

Fruit Juices – Choose Wisely!

With all the mixed information out there, it's easy to be confused about which fruit juices are good for you or whether you should drink them at all. To get your facts straight, educate yourself with reading the nutrition label and always eat whole fruits when you can!

What to Look for on a Label

1. **100 % fruit juice:** There are no added sugars in 100% juice – just the natural sugars found in whole fruit.
2. **Not-from-concentrate:** Not-from-concentrate means the fruit is squeezed, the juice is pasteurized and then packaged. Just like fresh-squeezed juice, there's no water, sugar, or preservatives added. *From-concentrate* means the fruit is squeezed and water is **extracted** to produce a concentrated form. At a later time, the water is added back in, the juice is pasteurized and packaged.
3. **Juice ≠ Drink!** Anything called “drink,” “beverage,” “punch,” “-ade,” or “cocktail” usually contain very little fruit juice and mostly sugar and water. By law, a drink that is not 100% fruit juice must be labeled “drink” or “punch” and not “juice.” Do not be fooled by labels saying, “contains real fruit juice.”

But What About the Sugar?

When we compare Apple Juice, Orange Juice, and Coca-Cola, the carbohydrate content is almost identical, with the majority coming from sugar. Both juices have a significant amount of sugar as a soft drink. Although 100% fruit juice has the same type of sugar in whole fruits (fructose), too much fructose can turn into fat. That is why it's important to select whole fruits when you can, because it has a smaller amount of fructose than 100% juice. Take the time to **read the nutrition label**. Do not just look at calories, but sugar and other vitamins and minerals.

Fruit Juice (1 serving, 8.1 fl. oz)	Calories	Carbohydrate (g)	Sugars (g)	Protein (g)	Fibre (g)	Cholesterol (mg)	Total Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)
Minute Maid, Apple Juice	120	27.5	26.3	0	0	0	0	18
Tropicana, Orange Juice	110	26	22	2	0	0	0	0
Coca Cola	97	27	27	0	0	0	0	33

100% Fruit Juice

Despite the large amount of sugar, studies confirm that drinking 100% fruit juice can actually boost intake of whole fruit and is linked to other healthy behaviors. The scientific literature reveals that appropriate consumption of 100% juice is associated with a more nutritious diet overall. Data from publicly available national datasets on food consumption supports the fact that children who include 100% fruit juice in their diet have higher quality diets. In addition, 100% juices contain naturally occurring phytonutrients - compounds found in fruits, vegetables and other plants that researchers believe have disease-preventative and disease fighting properties. If you can't get your kids to eat fruit, make sure they drink 100% juice to eventually get them to eat whole fruit.

And the Winner Is ...

About 70% of North Americans are not meeting the 7-10 servings of fruits and vegetables recommended by *Canada's Food Guide*. 1 serving is equivalent to ½ cup fruit, 1 fruit, or ½ cup 100% juice. **If you eat whole fruits, you obtain more benefits than juice:**

- **Fiber:** The body needs fiber to function well. Drinking fruit juice instead of eating fresh fruit may deprive you of enough fiber in your diet. Fiber is important if you are making efforts to stay fit and avoid excess weight. Eating a crispy Granny Smith apple satisfies your desire to snack better than do a few gulps of apple juice; the apple is also more filling so that you don't feel hungry seconds later.
- **Pulp:** When you "juice" fresh fruit, you remove the pulp, which is valuable because of its flavonoids. Researchers find that flavonoids may decrease your risk of cancer.
- **Skin:** Nutrition in fruit resides not only in the flesh but in the skin. Grapes, apples and pears are good examples of fruit with health-bearing skins. The skin of grape may reduce your risk of cancer and the skin of pears has vitamin C.

Resources: <http://www.toronto.ca/health/>, <http://www.fruitjuicefacts.org/>, <http://www.fitday.com/>