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Fruit Juice and Your Health

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Introduction

We all know how important it is to drink lots of water, but what about drinking fruit juices? You're taking in water along with vitamins and other nutrients. But did you know you are also taking in calories in the form of sugar. In fact the average person now gets 21% of his or her daily calories from beverages, which as a percentage has risen considerably in the last three decades.¹

Consider eating whole fruit rather than juice, as you will receive better nutrient value and less calories than fruit juice. For instance, an apple is about 60 calories, while a serving of



apple juice is 120 calories. Also when you eat fruit you are increasing your fiber intake, which can help you feel fuller. Note that the sugar in fruit is called fructose and your body processes it the same way as sugar. Why be concerned? Sugar is linked to a variety of health problems like tooth decay, obesity and diabetes.

If you or your children are going to drink fruit juice try to avoid products that have added sugar and seek products that are pure juice. Read juice labels carefully for calorie count and serving size. You should drink no more than 8 ounces of fruit juice per day. When in doubt, you should measure fruit juice in a measuring cup, as many drinking glasses are larger than recommended serving sizes.

For extra nutrient value, try squeezing your own juice. Using a juicing machine may retain more vitamins and nutrients. There are a number of great recipes available for juices that contain both vegetables and fruits. It is also a great way to incorporate foods like spinach and kale into your diet.

QUESTION?

You should limit a teenager's daily fruit juice intake to ...?

- A) 6 to 8 ounces
- B) 8 to 12 ounces
- C) 12 to 18 ounces

Answer: A) 8 to 12 ounces (Teenager)

TRUE OR FALSE?

Fiber makes you feel fuller

Answer: true

QUESTION?

What amount of juice should infants (under 6 months) get daily?

- A) None
- B) 4 ounces
- C) 8 ounces

Answer: A) None. Juice has no nutritional benefit for infants

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Kids and Teens

Just like adults, children and teens should consume fruit juice in moderation. The American Academy of Pediatrics makes the following recommendations for daily fruit juice consumption based on a child's age.²

- Younger than 6 months - Do not give fruit juice to infants younger than 6 months since it offers no nutritional benefit at this age.

- 1 to 6 years - Limit juice to 4 to 6 ounces (118 to 177 milliliters) per day. For children older than 6 months, fruit juice offers no nutritional benefits over whole fruits. Whole fruits also provide fiber and other nutrients. Do not allow your child to carry a cup or box of juice throughout the day.

- 7 to 18 years - Limit juice to 8 to 12 ounces (237 to 355 milliliters) per day.

Today's teenagers are faced with a variety of different drink options that can be juice, coffee or tea based. A lot of these beverages are sugar-sweetened especially, sodas, fruit juice, energy drinks and ice teas. These drinks are believed to be a key contributor to the obesity epidemic. According to a study published in the Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, drinking water instead of sugar-filled beverages could slash 235 calories per day from the diet of a teen.³ Clearly labeled product information can help teens and the rest of us make healthier beverage choices. A study

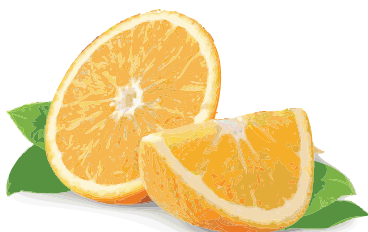
conducted by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health supports this theory. Researchers posted signs in grocery stores of a low-income Baltimore neighborhood. Each sign had one of the following messages: "Did you know that a bottle of soda or fruit juice has about 250 calories?"; "Did you know that a bottle of soda or fruit juice has about 10 percent of your daily calories?"; or "Did you know that working off a bottle of soda or fruit juice takes about 50 minutes of running?"

The researchers noted that the "50 minutes of running" text was the most effective, slashing soda and fruit juice sales by 50% among teenagers in the neighbourhood.⁴

Is Vitamin Water Better?

One of the newest products to join the beverage market is vitamin water, which usually contains fruit juice or flavoring plus small amounts of vitamins. It appears to be a good choice for those seeking to quench their thirst and get some extra vitamins. Unfortunately, again this type of drink contains on average 30 to 35 grams of sugar per bottle!

So when it comes to fluid watch what you drink! You may be getting way more sugar and therefore calories than what you might realize. Perhaps the best approach is Mother Nature's products water and whole fruit!



Quote to Inspire

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."

Albert Einstein

References:

1. For Better Pour Worse – (Beverage guide) Center for Science in the Public Interest, published 2006.

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3. Impact of Change in Sweetened Caloric Beverage Consumption on Energy Intake Among Children and Adolescents - Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2009; 163(4):336-343.

4. Reduction in Purchases of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Among Low-Income Black Adolescents After Exposure to Caloric Information - American Journal of Public Health, 2011 DOI: 10.2105/A-JPH.2011.300350.



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