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# Juices and Fruit Smoothies: Are They Really Good For You? by Tracey Dawkins

Posted by {C} Magazine



Are smoothies and fruit juices a part of your everyday life? You may want to consider taking a second look at your diet plan. Fruit smoothies and juices may not be as universally healthy as you think, and this article will reveal the potential health risks.

Smoothies and "naturally-sweetened" fruit juices are considered to be part of a healthy diet as they provide the nutrients of actual fruit. The "healthy beverage craze" began in Hollywood with celebrities regularly consuming on-the-go power drinks.

Today these beverages are available in nearly every juice bar and café. This trend continues to have a domino effect as smoothie makers and juicers have become a firm fixture in nearly one out of every two household kitchens. Juicing is big business for Amazon.com, as the cost of one stainless steel model is nearly \$1,200. Beverages giants, such as Coca Cola and Pepsi are also cashing in, by promoting a range of these beverages as the healthy alternatives to fizzy drinks.

However, health experts have concerns. According to Barry Popkin, the Professor of Nutrition at the University of North Carolina, the manufactured pulped-up fruit juices and smoothies are the new health risk, as they contain unhealthy levels of high fructose corn syrup. This sugar makes the liver work overtime, leading to health issues that include heart problems, obesity and diabetes.

A 250ml serving of grape juice can contain the same amount of sugar as four Krispy Kreme glazed donuts. Even worse, a smoothie contains even more sugar than a 650ml bottle of Coke.

The juicing process strips away the nutrients, such as tough fiber, which can be found in fruits and vegetables so juicing at home can be a better option as there are likely no added sugars or preservatives. The pulping process also strips away energy-boosting protein.

Now, this doesn't mean it's time to dump the juicer or give up on these beverages altogether. The key point here is to simply cut back. Professor Popkins strongly advises people to eat more fruit or even drink vegetable juice at least three times a week as two full-size oranges will leave you fuller for longer than sugar-ridden juices and smoothies that will leave you hungry within a few hours.

Furthermore, increasing your fruit intake means a better digestive system. When we eat fruit, the fiber forms a protective layer which acts like a barrier to the intestines. This barrier slows down the absorption of sugar, so the liver can catch up.

A recent survey has proven this fact. Researchers across the globe revealed that people who regularly eat fruits are less likely to get type-2 diabetes by seven percent, while those who drank smoothies and fruit juices on a regular basis are at an increased risk of the disease.

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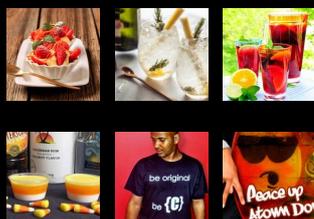


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