

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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Is The Juice the Same as The Fruit?

You have to admit, it is a lot easier to chug a glass or bottle or carton of orange juice than it is to peel and eat an orange. But is the nutritional value the same? It depends on what you're looking at.

All juices have some nutritional value. Most of the commercially prepared juices have plenty of vitamin C, some have vitamin A. Orange juice is a great source of folate, a B vitamin that seems to be connected to mental sharpness and keeping our memories. Most juices have minerals, including potassium and zinc. Most also have a decent amount of antioxidants and maybe some other phytonutrients. If it's a cloudy juice such as cider or orange juice with pulp there may be some fiber left in too.

Those are the good things. So what's not to like? For one thing, all the sugar. Even pure 100% juice has the sugar the fruit tree put in there. But if you consider that it may take several oranges to make one glass of juice, then you are getting all the sugar of 2 to 3 oranges. But you're not getting the fiber or all the other vitamins and minerals those oranges had.

One orange has enough almost twice as much vitamin C as the body needs in a day. Your body only hangs onto as much vitamin C as it needs for today. It gets rid of the rest, and tomorrow you need it all over again. But the extra sugar from those oranges sticks right to you. So while 1 medium orange has about 60 calories, 1 cup of orange juice has about 110 calories. And while one orange is usually enough to fill you up for the moment, most of us could easily drink several glasses of juice before we felt

'full'.

Some juices such as blueberry or pomegranate are advertised for their high concentration of antioxidants. Cherry juice is supposed to help our memory, cranberry juice is great for our urinary tracts. But all of these are expensive. Apple and white grape on the other hand are much less costly, and have much less in the way of nutrients and antioxidants. They're mostly sweet.

So, if you read the fine print on many of the '100% Juice' containers of blueberry or cranberry or cherry, you will find that while they have some of those better juices, a lot of what's in the bottle is apple juice or white grape juice. Plus, since apple and grape juices are quite sweet, manufacturers can use concentrates of these juices to sweeten the other juices and still call them 100% juice. They're just not 100% of the most beneficial juice.

Read the labels, especially the ingredient list. The higher up on the list you find apple juice or grape juice, the more of it there is. The lower the 'big name' juice is on the list, the less of it there is.

Another thing to look for on the label is the fine print. Anything other than 100% juice will be called a 'drink', 'punch', 'beverage', 'cocktail' or fruit 'ade'. These are mostly sugar water (high fructose corn syrup), with some coloring, a little real juice, and probably some added vitamin C. There's no problem with the added vitamins, we'll absorb them if we need them. But many have more than we need, and there's little or no evidence they will really help protect our hearts, improve our immune systems or build our bones.

So while juice can be a welcome thirst-quencher or a quick pick-me-up, you're much better off taking the extra minute to bite into the real thing. Here's a quick fruit

salad made mostly with canned fruit. You could use it for a hurricane meal dessert if you wanted, but it's great after any dinner. Let the children chop up the apples and slice the grapes in half too! If you like a creamy sauce, stir the fruit juice into a cup of vanilla or plain fat-free yogurt.

Canny Ambrosia Salad

1 can (15 oz) pineapple chunks in juice	1 medium apple
1 can (11 oz) mandarin oranges in water	½ C halved green or red grapes
1 Tbsp honey	¼ tsp ground cinnamon
¾ C low fat granola	(1 C fat free yogurt optional)

Drain the fruit, but save 1/3 cup of pineapple juice. Wash and dice the apple. Mix fruit in large bowl. In small bowl combine saved pineapple juice, honey and cinnamon (and yogurt if desired). Pour over fruit and mix gently. To serve, divide into small bowls and top each bowl with 1 Tbsp granola. Serves 6.

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