

# NUTRITION MATTERS

## THE TRUTH ABOUT FRUIT JUICES AND DRINKS

Fruit juices and fruit-flavoured drinks are popular choices, especially among children and youth. In fact, children and youth get at least one third of their recommended vegetable and fruit servings from juice. Although these drinks may seem like a healthy and easy choice, eating fruit is always best.



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FRUIT JUICE AND FRUIT DRINKS

#### **Fruit juice:**

Products labelled **fruit juice** are made from 100 per cent real juice.

Fruit juices contain a high amount of natural sugar. A glass of juice has the same amount of sugar as a glass of pop. Even though the sugar in fruit juice is from a natural source (fruit), your body treats all sugar the same.

Too much sugar from any source can cause tooth decay, diarrhea, stomach upset and weight problems.

The calories you get from drinking juice do not make you feel full like the actual fruit does. And even though fruit juice provides some vitamins and minerals, eating an actual fruit will also provide fibre and other nutrients, which are important for health.



#### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

1-877-464-9675  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
[york.ca/nutrition](http://york.ca/nutrition)

## Fruit drinks:

Drinks labelled fruit drink, beverage, punch, cocktail or have 'ade' at the end of the name (e.g. lemonade) are not real juice because they are made with added sugar.

Fruit-flavoured drinks are made to look like juice, but are just added sugar and water with some flavours. Some fruit drinks have added vitamins in them, but this does not make them a healthy choice.

Don't be fooled. The words "made with real juice" do not mean the drink is 100 per cent fruit juice. Read the ingredient list, if sugar, fructose or glucose are on the list, the drink has added sugar and is not a healthy choice.

## AVOID OR LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF FRUIT JUICE CHILDREN AND YOUTH DRINK AS FOLLOWS:

**Before age 1** – it is best not to offer juice at all

**1 to 3 years old** – avoid or limit to ½ cup (125 mL) per day

**4 to 6 years old** – avoid or limit to ½ to ¾ cup (125 to 175 mL) per day

**7 to 18 years old** – avoid or limit to 1 cup (250 mL) per day

## REMEMBER...

- Babies and children do not need to drink juice.
- Fruit juice offers no nutritional benefit over whole fruit for infants and children and has no essential role in the diets of children.
- Juice can fill children up, making them less hungry for food.
- Sipping on fruit juices between meals can cause tooth decay, even when it has been diluted with water.

- If you offer juice to a young child, offer it only in an open cup while they are seated and eating a meal or snack.
- Do not use juice to calm an upset child.
- Commonly available juice boxes are 200 mL in size and surpass some of the limits suggested above.
  - Send water or milk with an ice pack in your child's school lunch bag.
  - Water and milk are the best drink choices for children and youth.
- If juice is offered, ensure it is pasteurized. Unpasteurized juices or ciders may contain bacteria that may be harmful to children.
- Juices that are advertised as calorie-reduced or lower in sugar are just watered down juice and are not safer for your child's teeth.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information and additional nutrition resources, visit [york.ca/nutrition](http://york.ca/nutrition) or [unlockfood.ca](http://unlockfood.ca)

To speak to a registered dietitian at no cost, call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000

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