

5 Smart Ways to Choose the Right *Juice*

Where there's juice, there are some great-for-you options—and some that are filled with sugary calories and too much salt.

Here's what to sip and what to leave on the shelf. Plus, the truth about those trendy (and pricey!) cleanses. **BY SARI HARRAR**

1 *Turn* THE BOTTLE AROUND

The front of the label may lead you to believe one thing, but the whole truth is in the ingredients list on the back. One “pomegranate-blueberry” drink, for example, contains just 0.3% pomegranate juice, 0.2% blueberry juice, and mostly apple and grape juice. That's fine if you want apple and grape; not fine if you want the nutrients in pomegranates. And if you see salt or sweeteners—including honey and evaporated cane juice—listed, leave the bottle on the shelf, says Manhattan dietitian Keri Glassman, R.D.

2 WATCH FOR *sugar bombs*

The trouble with fruit-only juices: it's easy to down excess calories and sugar because they don't fill you up the way a piece of fruit does. Eight ounces of grape juice, for instance, delivers as much sugar as a pound and three quarters of grapes.

Even though it's natural sugar, fruit juice has almost the exact same effect on your blood sugar and weight as soda does. So limit a fruit-juice serving to the same number of calories you'd get from a piece of fruit: about 60, Glassman says.

JUICE DECODER

Just when you got used to coffee lingo, along comes juice jargon. Here's what it means.

Fresh Juice

Usually made in a traditional juicer with whirling metal blades. Detractors believe heat from these blades destroys some nutrients—but there are still some in there.

Cold-Pressed

Made from produce that is crushed, then compressed and subjected to intense pressure. Juice from this process is said to be denser in nutrients.

Traditional Pasteurized Juice

Made from fresh juice that's heated to kill organisms that cause spoilage. The heat can reduce nutrients, but the sealed juice lasts longer.



3 PICK THE *darkest* JUICE ON THE SHELF

If you're turning to juice as a convenient package for the nutrients you don't always get from your meals, make sure to select the darkest drinks—like those with produce including kale, spinach, beets, tomatoes, and pomegranate. These usually contain more vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals than vegetables like cucumbers and celery, which tend to be used as inexpensive fillers, says Kentucky-based nutrition consultant Christopher Mohr, Ph.D., R.D.

4 KNOW WHY YOU'RE DRINKING THAT *juice*

If you're thinking about going juice-only with a fast or cleanse, first get clear on what it can and can't do for you. A short (three-day) juice regimen can be helpful in kick-starting healthy eating habits, says David L. Katz, M.D., founding director of the Yale University Prevention Research Center. "But that's not really about the juice," he says. "It's about making a total commitment to taking

care of yourself and devoting your mind to self-care. That can be valuable spiritually, mentally, and physically as the starting point for making healthy changes."

Juice fasts can also reduce cholesterol and insulin levels, but recent research confirmed that improvements vanish quickly—in this study, within a week after people returned to normal eating. And while you may drop weight, it's defi-

nately not cheap. A three-day cleanse regimen could set you back as much as \$175. Don't expect it to "detoxify" you either, says Katz. "Your liver, kidneys, and digestive system already do that magnificently."

Definitely skip the fasts and cleanses if you have a serious chronic illness, are prone to low blood sugar, have difficulty controlling your diabetes, or are elderly or frail, he adds.

5 MIX JUICE AND *kids* CAREFULLY

Be even choosier about juice when you're buying it for kids. True, a sip or more of your veggie-containing juice can entice kids who resist eating greens on the plate, says Katz. But too much sugary and fruity juice can contribute to tooth decay, obesity, and even nutrition gaps if it nudges out other good foods from their diets.

Keep juice intake to four to six ounces a day for kids age 1 to 6; eight to 12 ounces for kids age 7 and older. Even better, if they're sipping fruit-based juice, pour only half the recommended amount and cut the sugar and the calories by diluting it with an equal amount of water.

