



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Make it your business to know the sugar content of foods your children eat every day. If you need to pull back on certain things, then do it. The health benefits could be huge in the long term.

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FRUIT juice could be even worse for your health than drinking cola and lemonade, US research suggests. The study of 13,000 adults found that a 12 oz glass of juice a day could increase the risk of early death by almost a quarter.

Experts said the fructose content of such drinks could be driving up insulin resistance and stimulating hormones that promotes fat deposition around the waist. Both can lead to a greater chance of heart disease and diabetes.

The new research, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, compared 100% fruit juices with sugar-sweetened drinks such as cola and lemonade.

It found that higher death rates were associated consuming all sugary drinks, including fruit juices.

A daily 12 oz (340ml) glass of a sugar-sweetened drink such as cola was linked to a 6% increased risk of early death over the six year study.

Drinking an extra fruit juice of the same volume was linked to a 24% rise in premature mortality.

British scientists said the findings were important because too many juices and smoothies are being

consumed in the UK, eating pieces of fruit would be better.

I believe most children leave home in the morning having had more than their daily sugar allowance. A breakfast including a large glass of fruit juice, two slices of bread with jam is around seven teaspoons of sugar and a child's recommended daily allowance is only six. Of course if you then take into account the rest of the day's food and drink, there is a large excess of calories per day. Accumulate this over a year, five years and in many cases a decade you begin to realise why we have a massive obesity crisis on our hands.

Dr Alison Tedstone, chief nutritionist at Public Health England, said: "This study is a

*Exercise evokes
more initiative,
more energy and
more happiness*

**Motivational quote
of the day**

> How much sugar has your child consumed before they leave the house in the morning?



reminder that consuming sugary drinks can contribute to dental caries, increased calories, weight gain and associated ill health.

"Current advice is to swap sugary drinks for water, lower fat milks and lower sugar or diet drinks. While fruit and vegetable juices can contribute to one of your 5 A Day, it's important to limit juice and smoothies to 150 mls each day."

Fruit juices are a poor replacement for actual fruit.

Many parents are unaware of the

sugar content in what are usually seen as healthy foods and drinks.

Four grams of sugar is equivalent to one teaspoon therefore your child's recommended

daily allowance is 24 grams per day.

It may shock you when you start reading the labels and realise the amount of hidden sugar in many foods and drinks.

This study would suggest the health benefits of fruit juices are not sufficient to counteract their sugar content.

Hidden sugar in 'healthy drinks'

Approximate sugar in teaspoons per 330ml (size of a can of coke)

- Innocent apple and mango juice - 8
- Coca-Cola original - 10
- Tropicana orange juice smoothie - 7
- Schweppes Lemonade - 3.5
- Rubicon mango juice drink - 4
- Ocean Spray cranberry classic juice drink - 4
- Copella apple juice - 8
- Naked mango juice smoothie - 7

FITNESS TIP

Try to change your child's association with food. Rather than sitting and picking on unhealthy snacks at night get them out for a quick blast of fresh air and break their habits.