

Soft Drinks and School-Age Children

Juice - In Moderation

Definitions - According to Food and Drug Administration Regulations¹

- To be labeled as a fruit juice, the product must be 100% juice. For juices reconstituted from concentrate, the label must state that the product is reconstituted from concentrate.
- Any beverage that is less than 100% fruit juice must list the percentage of the product that is fruit juice, and the beverage must include a descriptive term, such as "drink", "beverage" or "cocktail."
- In general, juice drinks contain between 10% and 99% juice and added sweeteners, flavors, and sometimes fortifiers, such as vitamin C or calcium. These ingredients must be listed on the label.

Composition of Fruit Juice¹

- Water is the main component.
- Simple carbohydrates (natural-occurring sugars) are the next most prevalent nutrients.
- Juice has a small amount of protein and minerals.
- Calcium-fortified juice has the same calcium level as milk, but lacks other nutrients found in milk.
- Some juices are good sources of potassium, vitamin A and vitamin C.
- Juice contains no fat or cholesterol, but little or no fiber.

American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for Fruit Juice Intake¹

Fruit juice should not be given to infants before 6 months of age.

- **After 6 months of age, infants should not be given juice from bottles or cups that allow them to consume juice easily throughout the day.**
- **Infants should not be given juice at bedtime.**
- **For children ages 1-6, limit juice to four to six ounces per day.**
- **For children ages 7 to 18, limit juice to eight to 12 ounces per day.**
- **Children should be encouraged to eat whole fruit.**

One hundred percent fruit juice can be a healthy part of a child's diet if it is provided in appropriate amounts and if a variety of juices are included. However, excessive juice consumption is associated with malnutrition (overnutrition and undernutrition), diarrhea, stomach problems and tooth decay.

¹Pediatrics 2001; 107:1210-1213.