

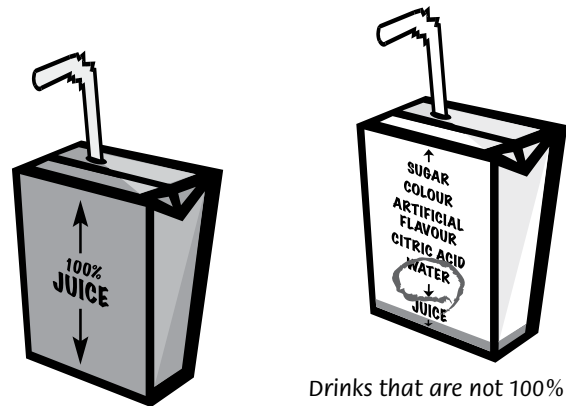
# Juices and Fruity Drinks

The difference between 100% fruit juices and “fruity drinks” (e.g., “fruit beverages”, “fruit drinks”, “fruit cocktails”) can be a difficult concept for the students to grasp, but is a very important teaching point. Although the majority of added sugar being consumed by students often comes from these drinks, they – and often their parents – may not know the difference between 100% fruit juice and fruity drinks.

100% fruit juice contains some of the natural vitamins (such as vitamin C, potassium and B-vitamins) found in fruit. However, fruit juice still contains a lot of concentrated sugar, and has the same effect on teeth as other sugary drinks. For this reason, children should have no more than 1 serving (125 mL or 1/2 cup) of fruit juice each day. A healthier alternative to 100% fruit juice would be a glass of water and fresh fruit, which provides all the vitamins, minerals, and fibre naturally present, but with much less sugar! Juice is not a necessary part of a healthy diet. Fruits and vegetables are!

Fruity drinks have added sugar along with other additives that are not good for growing children. Added sugars in fruit drinks (those that are not labelled “100% juice”) can be particularly inconspicuous, because these drinks are often labelled to look healthy:

- Fruit nectars or juice blends contain added sugar and only 50% or more juice content.
- Fruit drinks, cocktails and beverages contain added sugars and less than 50% juice.



Juice labelled “100% fruit juice” or “unsweetened 100% juice”.

Drinks that are not 100% juice contain only a small amount of juice or none at all.

## What about vegetable juice?

Juice can be made from vegetables (e.g., tomatoes, carrots, celery, beets, parsley, lettuce, watercress, spinach).

They are often high in added salt (sodium). Some vegetable juices can have fruit juice or sugar added to them. A healthy alternative to vegetable juice would be a glass of water and fresh vegetables, which provides all the vitamins, minerals and fibre naturally present, but with much less sugar!

## Fortified juices

Some juices, such as orange juice, may be fortified with added calcium or vitamin D. These juices have the same amount of calcium or vitamin D as plain milk or unsweetened fortified soy beverage, but are much lower in protein and should not be used to supplement calcium and vitamin D requirements on a regular basis.

## Are unpasteurized fruit juices and ciders safe?

Not for everyone. Infants, young children (ages 5 and under), older adults, and people with weakened immune systems (such as those with HIV or those being treated for cancer) are most at risk. Unpasteurized juice or cider does not undergo the treatment needed to kill harmful bacteria. Often they are sold at health food stores, local orchards, roadside stands, farmers’ markets, country fairs and juice bars. Unpasteurized juice or cider may also be found on ice or in refrigerated display cases and in produce sections at grocery stores.

## References

The following sections were adapted with OSNPPH permission from *Sip Smart!™ Ontario Teacher Resource Guide*, 2016: *What about vegetable juice?*, *Fortified juices*, *Are unpasteurized fruit juices and ciders safe?*

HealthlinkBC, *Unpasteurized Fruit Juices and Ciders: A Potential Health Risk*, February 2010

Health Canada, *Food & Nutrition/Food Safety/Unpasteurized Fruit Juice and Cider*, August 2007