

Is fruit juice good for me?



Fruit is an excellent source of Vitamin C and fibre. Vitamin C helps to keep your immune system working well, and also helps your body to absorb iron.

However, fruit is quite high in sugar. And this is where it gets confusing – the sugar in whole fruit is not counted as ‘free sugar’ but in juices and smoothies it is. ‘Free sugar’ is also known as ‘added sugar’ and is the sugar that is added to processed foods such as sweets, cakes, fizzy drinks and chocolate. It is recommended that our consumption of ‘free sugar’ is reduced as excess intake can increase risk of overweight and type 2 diabetes.

For this reason, the best way to take your fruit is to eat it. As once it is juiced, much of the fibre content is removed. The fibre will help to slow the pace at which the sugar enters the system and keep you fuller for longer.

It is important to be mindful of portions of fruit, and remember that 1 piece = 1 portion, in the case of berries and grapes it is the amount that fits into one cupped hand.

1 portion of fruit juice = 150ml, and it is not recommended to have more than once a day.

Try adding water to make it go further!

Who needs to take a vitamin?

Not everyone needs to take a vitamin, in fact the only one that it is advised we all take is Vitamin D – as this is absorbed from sunlight and we simply don’t get enough of that in the autumn and winter months (especially in Manchester!)

Apart from those stated in the table below, you should be able to get all the nutrients you need from a varied diet.



What is a varied diet?

- Plenty of fruits and vegetables – frozen, tinned or fresh are fine. Aim for a variety of these and at least 5 a day.



- Some starchy carbohydrates in appropriate portions – rice, bread, pasta, potatoes. Wholemeal choices are the most nutritious, although some 50/50 loaves are fortified with calcium, iron and Vitamin D.
- Some milk and dairy products, or alternatives that are fortified with calcium.
- Two portions per day of protein foods – beans, pulses, meat, fish, chicken and eggs. Try to replace meat with pulses once or twice per week.
- Oily fish such as mackerel, sardines or pilchards once a week is a great source of vitamins and healthy fats that are good for your heart.
- Not too many foods high in fat, salt and sugar – such as takeaways, processed foods and snacks.

The table below indicates who is recommended to take a vitamin and how much:

Who?	Vitamin	Why?
All babies under the age of 1	8.5 – 10mcg Vitamin D in vitamin drops (Babies drinking 500ml or more of infant formula do not need additional vitamin D supplementation)	To prevent a vitamin D deficiency
Adults and children aged 1 and over	10mcg Vitamin D per day during the autumn and winter months (Some groups, such as those who cannot go outside that often or who cover their skin when outside may benefit from a supplement all year round).	To prevent a vitamin D deficiency
Pregnant people, or people trying to conceive	400mcg Folic Acid daily from pre-conception until 12 weeks of pregnancy. (A higher dose of folic acid is recommended for people	To reduce the risk of neural tube defects in the unborn baby.

	at a high risk of conceiving a child with a neural tube defect, including those who have previously had an infant with a neural tube defect or if they have diabetes or sickle-cell disease.	
People suffering from medical conditions or deficiencies, or who have had stomach surgery	As per your doctor	To prevent a deficiency
People following a vegan diet	10mcg of Vitamin B12 daily Up to 150mcg of iodine daily – do not exceed this dose as excess iodine can be harmful.	To prevent deficiencies in these nutrients.

Table taken from British Dietetic Association website

- ✓ A pharmacy, supermarket or your local chemist is a reputable place to get a supplement from – avoid buying from an unknown company on the internet.
- ✓ Make sure you need the supplement – have you spoken to a doctor or dietitian?
- ✓ Could you alter your diet to boost your nutrient intake first?
- ✓ Be careful with supplements that claim to delay ageing, help you to lose weight or boost your metabolism – there is often little scientific evidence back up these claims.