

Juicing Myths Exposed (2 Green Recipes Included)



To juice or not to juice-that is the question! Juicing has risen to the forefront of the diet platform, crediting juice programs with both cleansing and weight-loss. Truth or fiction? The answers are not as black and white as we would like to think.

The Cleansing Claim: Let's start by taking a closer look at the "cleansing" benefit. Most juicing advocates maintain that juicing gives your body a rest from digestion. Juices enter the body already broken down, so the mechanics of digestion aren't necessary, and the body gets a rest. Additionally, they claim that because the juicing is consistent throughout the day, the juices actually flush out toxins and fats from the body.

The Cleansing Reality: Drinking your fruits and veggies robs you of the fiber that actually aids in digestion, and overall colon health. So juicing definitely does NOT give your digestive system a rest; long-term juicing will actually impair your digestive health. Also, you miss out on the healthy antioxidants found in the stem and seeds of certain produce. Another downside of juicing as a result of the lost fiber is that the body absorbs fructose (fruit sugar) more easily, which can affect blood sugar levels. Will a juice cleanse actually flush toxins and fats out of your body? Unfortunately, the answer is no. As long as your digestive system is functioning properly, it will eliminate fecal matter regularly, and maintain a healthy colon. There is no need to flood the body with juices to achieve this. In fact, flooding your body with juices can actually disrupt your electrolyte balance, leading to many unwanted health ailments. Finally, without sufficient protein, your body has no raw materials with which to build new tissue. The lack of fat leaves your skin and hair in poor shape and contributes to malabsorption of fat-soluble vitamins. So juicing can technically induce fat-soluble (A, D, E, & K) vitamin deficiencies!

The Weight-Loss Claim: The claim here is simple. Juice, juice, juice with nothing else, and you'll lose so much weight you won't recognize yourself! Juice advocates rave about quick weight loss, quick absorption, and concentrated nutrients.

The Weight-Loss Reality: Most juice programs limit daily caloric intake to approx. 1000-1200kcal/day. Will you lose weight? Of course you will lose weight when you are depriving your body of vital carbs, fats, proteins, and overall calories. But this weight loss is short-lived, and when you begin eating real food again, the weight will come back with a bang! This low caloric level can actually slow down metabolic function, as

the body becomes more weary about letting go of fat stores, when not enough energy (via food calories) is coming into the body regularly. As a result, when the juicing is over, your body's metabolism is now functioning at a handicapped pace, and you will become more prone to fast weight gain! Quick absorption and concentrated nutrients? No and no! Your body can absorb only small amounts of water-soluble vitamins at a time. When taken in excess, the remaining amounts just get flushed out by the kidneys through the urine. So those expensive green drinks are to some degree, money down the drain! Also, as mentioned earlier, the skins and seeds of some produce contain healthy antioxidants, which you rob yourself of, when limiting your produce intake to just juices.

Bottom Line

1. **Great for on-the-go:** Do you lead a busy lifestyle? Do you tend to grab a doughnut and a cup of coffee when dashing for the morning train, and call this breakfast? Then replacing your sugary fat-filled morning indulgence with a healthy juice or smoothie is definitely the way to go. It's a great quick-fix for a mini-meal or snack on the go.
2. **Don't cleanse for a long period of time:** Is there a proper way to do a juice cleanse? Juicing exclusively for more than 24 hours can definitely disrupt many of the body's systems (not only digestive), and although you may feel happy with the short-term benefits, the long-term consequences will have you wishing you never picked up that first cup of juice.
3. **Green Juice or Green Smoothie?** What is better-juice or smoothie? Smoothies are generally protein based (either cow's milk, almond milk, etc), and contain the entire flesh of the produce (which includes antioxidants and fiber). So generally, smoothies are best!

Franci's Fat-Fighting Fit Tip:

- Forget the "juice-only" craze and learn how to strategically incorporate juices into a healthy regime.
- Write a 1-week food journal to examine what actually enters your body daily.
- Upon review, circle all the problematic foods with regard to weight loss.
- Now vow to replace them next week with a healthy juice or smoothie.
- You will see the weight drop off, your metabolism speed up, and you will both see and feel the healthier you (now that you've nixed all the junk food)!

My Fab Faves: 2 awesome juices you should try soon!!

1. The Tart N' Tangy Juice:

- 1 Green Apple
- 1 Lime
- 2 large red beets
- 3-4 leaves beet greens
- 3-4 Carrots
- 3-4 Celery stalks
- Small piece of Ginger

2. Sunrise Smoothie:

- 1/2 cup 1% low-fat milk
- 1/2 cup crushed ice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 frozen sliced ripe large banana
- 1 cup plain Greek 2% yogurt