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**Fruit juices, drinks and smoothies might not be one of your "five a day" according to new sugar study**

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**Just a few weeks after it was revealed how much sugar was lurking in your**[**Starbucks**](http://www.cityam.com/company/starbucks)[**coffee drinks**](http://www.cityam.com/234776/starbucks-costa-kfc-and-caffe-nero-top-list-of-worst-offenders-as-research-finds-up-to-25-teaspoons-of-sugar-in-hot-drinks-from-coffee-outlets)**and a fortnight since**[**George Osborne**](http://www.cityam.com/people/george-osborne)**announced a**[**sugar tax on soft drinks**](http://www.cityam.com/236905/budget-2016-chancellor-to-introduce-sugar-tax-on-soft-drinks-)**, it seems fruit juice could be another villain too.**

The authors of a new study have even gone so far as to suggest that fruit drinks with a high sugar content should not be classed as one of the government's "five a day" portions of fruit and vegetables.

Fruit juices, drinks and smoothies often contain "unacceptably high" levels of sugar in the form of free sugars that are on a par with sugary soft drinks, a new study published yesterday in the BMJ Open journal has found.

While the research was looking at fruit drinks marketed to children, in 40 per cent of cases it found as much sugar in one small carton or bottle as a child should consume in a day. Such findings could raise questions about the level of sugar in adult-sized portions of similar fruit drinks.

The study excluded sports drinks, iced teas, sugar-sweetened carbonated drinks and cordials (on the grounds that they were not marketed to children), instead testing juices, smoothies and other fruit drinks from Tesco, [Asda](http://www.cityam.com/company/asda), Sainsbury’s, Marks & Spencer, [Waitrose](http://www.cityam.com/company/waitrose), The Co-operative and [Morrisons](http://www.cityam.com/company/morrison-wm-supermarkets).

It found on average, juice drinks contained the lowest amounts (mean 5.6 g/100 ml) of sugar and smoothies contained the highest (mean 13.0 g/100 ml). Of the 158 juice drinks surveyed, 85 contained at least 19g of sugar - a child’s entire maximum daily amount of free sugars.

The study authors warned that as increasing public awareness of the negative impact of sugar-sweetened drinks on health, parents may replace soft drinks with fruit juices, drinks and smoothies that are perceived to be healthier.

"Consumption of free sugars, particularly in the form of beverages, can lead to an increase in total sugars intake and a reduction in the consumption of more nutritionally valuable food, thus leading to an unhealthy diet, increased weight and risk of non-communicable diseases," the authors said.

"We suggest that fruit juices, drinks and smoothies with high free sugars content should not count as one of the UK government’s ‘5 a Day’ recommendations."