**HALF of 'healthy' smoothies and fruit juices contain more than a child's daily sugar allowance**

* **'Healthy' drinks contain up to ten teaspoons of sugar in pack, study finds**
* **Experts say fruit juices should no longer contribute to official 'five-a-day'**
* **Public Health England says people should drink just 150ml of juices a day**
* **Research shows many fruit juice products are sold in bigger containers**

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**PUBLISHED:** 01:37, 24 March 2016 | **UPDATED:** 12:44, 25 March 2016

Almost half of smoothies and fruit juices marketed at youngsters contain more than a child’s entire daily allowance of sugar, according to a major study.

The supposedly healthy drinks - many of them branded with cartoon characters and packaged in lunchbox-sized cartons - contain up to ten teaspoons of sugar in a pack.

British experts last night said that fruit juices should no longer be allowed to contribute to the official ‘five-a-day’ guidelines because of the volume of sugar they contain.

Public Health England last week downgraded the role of smoothies and juices in its suggested diet, warning that people should only drink 150ml a day, with a meal, and that the products should only count once towards the recommended five daily servings of fruit and vegetables.

But the new research shows that many fruit juice products are sold in containers far bigger than 150ml.

The Liverpool University team which led the study said that parents should feed children whole fruit instead, and when they do buy juice, should water it down.

Professor Simon Capewell said: ‘Increasing public awareness of the detrimental effect sugar sweetened drinks have on kids’ teeth and waistlines has prompted many parents to opt for seemingly healthier fruit juice and smoothie alternatives.

‘Unfortunately our research shows that these parents have been misled. The sugar content of the fruit drinks, including natural fruit juices and smoothies tested, is unacceptably high. And smoothies are among the worst offenders.’

The team assessed 203 pure fruit juices, juice drinks made from concentrate, and smoothies on sale in British supermarkets in July and August 2014.

The researchers, whose work is published in the medical journal BMJ Open, found that if 200ml of each drink were consumed, for 40 per cent of products a child would drink more than the 19g of sugar – about five teaspoons - that is the daily recommended limit for a child aged four to six.

### REVEALED: THE 5 WORST OFFENDERS FOR SUGAR

Sugar content per 200ml serving. A 19g of sugar – about five teaspoons - is the daily recommended limit for a child aged four to six.

**Smoothie**

Tesco Goodness Slurper Apple & Banana Fruit Smoothie Snack for kids **32.2g**

Tesco Goodness Slurper Apple & Strawberry Fruit Smoothie Snack for kids **32.2g**

Tesco Goodness Slurper Apple Fruit Smoothie Snacks **32.2g**

Drinks such as ASDA's tropical juice can contain more than a child's recommended daily intake of sugar

Ella's Kitchen The Yellow One Squished Smoothie Fruits **30.2g**

Ella's Kitchen The Purple One Squished Smoothie Fruits **27.6g**

**Fruit Juice**

Asda Chosen by Kids Tropical Juice From Concentrate **26g**

Morrisons Pineapple Juice From Concentrate **25.2g**

Eager Cloudy Pressed Apple & Mango Juice **24g**

Essential Waitrose Pure Pineapple Juice From Concentrate **23.8g**

Eager 100% Cloudy Pressed Pineapple Juice **22.5g**

**Fruit Juice Drink**

Rubicon Lychee Exotic Juice Drink **26.6g**

Rubicon Passion Exotic Juice Drink **26.2g**

Rubicon Mango Exotic Juice Drink **26.2g**

Rubicon Guava Exotic Juice Drink **25.4g**

Capri-Sun Blackcurrant Juice Drink **24.4g**

**Source: Action for Sugar 2014 figures which still apply today**

Research by the Daily Mail yesterday confirmed that most of the products they assessed are still on sale, and while some have reduced their sugar content, the 12 sweetest drinks contain more sugar, millilitre for millilitre, than fizzy drinks such as Coca-Cola.

While doctors have long warned about the danger of added sugar in fizzy drinks, they are rapidly becoming aware that the ‘free’ natural sugar in fruit juice is also unhealthy.

The sugar in whole fruit is released very gradually, because the body has to break the cells down, but once fruit is squeezed the sugars become ‘free’ - and so sugar in juice is rapidly absorbed.

The researchers found that among the 158 fruit juice drinks analysed, the average sugar content was 5.6 g per 10ml.

Among the 21 pure fruit juices tested, the sugar content was higher, at 10.7g per 100ml. And in the 24 smoothies on sale, it was even higher, at 13g per 100ml. A can of Coca Cola, by comparison, contains, 10.6g per 100ml.

The research suggests that the Government’s proposed sugar levy, announced in last week’s Budget, will have limited impact.

The measure, to be introduced in two years, will add a tax only to drinks with added sugar, not to drinks containing natural sugar.

While some ‘concentrate’ fruit drinks contain added sugar, smoothies and pure fruit juice usually do not.

The findings come as a ComRes poll for the Daily Mail suggests that the British public do not think the tax on sugary drinks will be effective in reducing obesity in Britain.

Some 57 per cent of respondents said it will be either very or fairly ineffective, compared to 41 per cent who feel it will be very or fairly effective.

Co-author of the research, Kawther Hashem of Queen Mary, University of London, said: ‘It is highly concerning that many parents are still buying fruit juices and juice drinks for their children thinking they are choosing healthy products.

‘These juices rot children’s teeth and give children a “sweet tooth” that will affect their general health in later life. Juice should be an occasional treat, not an everyday drink.’

Dr Gunter Kuhnle, food scientist at the University of Reading, said: ‘This is a very well conducted survey of drinks marketed to children with very important findings - it is not only fizzy drinks, the main target of the sugar levy, which contribute to total sugar intake.’

Dr Ian Johnson, nutrition researcher at the Institute of Food Research, added: ‘We know from previous research that, in adults, a high consumption of free sugar disrupts the body’s ability to regulate its energy intake so as to maintain a healthy body weight.

‘It seems very likely that this disruption begins early in life and that sugary beverages aimed at children are a significant factor. This research provides a timely illustration of this problem.’

But Gavin Partington, director general of the British Soft Drinks Association, said: ‘Fruit juice and fruit juice smoothies provide essential vitamins and nutrients which many people in the UK today are sadly lacking.

‘Only last week Public Health England confirmed that 150ml of fruit juice or fruit juice smoothies can contribute to the five-a-day target.

‘Very few people reach their five-a-day target and given the positive contribution it has to the diet, it is counter-intuitive to suggest that 100 per cent pure juice should not contribute to it.’

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-3507123/Half-supposedly-healthy-smoothies-fruit-juices-aimed-children-contain-daily-sugar-allowance.html#ixzz4Bk3Ye4En>   
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