

Fruits and vegetables are “juicy foods” that consist mostly of water, but they also provide a variety of vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and a good amount of fiber that helps fill you up. Juice is another story. When whole produce is processed into juice most of the fiber is lost and you’re left with a less nutritious end product. And consider this: It takes a couple minutes to eat a 60-calorie orange but only a couple seconds to guzzle down a 110-calorie glass of OJ.

Fruit juice, in particular, is a highly concentrated source of fruit sugar. This can raise your blood sugar quickly, and that’s why juice is not recommended for people with type 2 diabetes. Individuals with high triglycerides should avoid fruit juice as well, as its concentrated simple sugars can raise triglyceride levels even higher. Fruit drinks — not to be confused with 100 percent juices — are an even worse choice because they contain added sugars and less nutrition. Because both fruit juices and fruit drinks are calorie-dense and low in fiber, people trying to lose or manage weight should dramatically limit their intake and choose fresh, filling whole fruit instead.

Vegetables are naturally lower in sugar than fruit, which means freshly made vegetable juice is lower in calories than fruit juice and can be a helpful way to “squeeze” more produce into your diet. However, bottled and canned vegetable and tomato juices are not generally recommended as they contain high amounts of sodium, which increases your risk of hypertension.

While it’s better to get your nutrients and fiber from whole vegetable and fruit sources, juice does still contain vitamins and minerals. For example, certain juices are high in vitamin C and contain folate and minerals such as potassium. Some juices, like orange juice, may also be fortified with calcium. If you are going to drink juice, look for 100 percent juice that doesn’t have any added sugar or sodium. You can also make your own fresh squeezed or pressed juices at home. And you may want to consider diluting your beverage with water or calorie-free seltzer to cut calories and sugar.