

Drinking 100 percent fruit juice is associated with improved diet quality in children

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Consumption of 100 percent fruit juice is closely linked to improved nutrient intake and overall diet quality in children and teens, according to new research presented yesterday at the Experimental Biology (EB) 2010 meeting.

Two new studies from researchers at the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and Baylor College of Medicine clearly highlight the benefits of drinking 100 percent [fruit juice](#). Researchers used data from the 2003-2006 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) to compare the diets of juice drinkers to non-consumers.

According to the findings, children 2-5 years of age who consumed fruit juice had significantly higher intakes of vitamin C, potassium, and magnesium and significantly lower intakes of added sugars compared to non-fruit juice consumers. In addition, higher intake of fruit juice was directly correlated with increased consumption of whole fruits and [whole grains](#).

Children 6-12 years of age showed a similar positive association between intake of 100 percent juice and higher intakes of the key nutrients, as well as dietary fiber. Overall diet quality, as assessed by the Healthy Eating Index (a measure that evaluates conformance to federal dietary guidance) was higher in all fruit juice consumers assessed.

The researchers reported that a significantly higher percentage of non-fruit juice consumers 2-18 years of age failed to meet the recommended

levels for several key nutrients, including vitamins A and C and folate, compared to those who drank 100 percent juice. Comparatively, a greater percentage of those in the fruit juice group exceeded Adequate Intake levels for calcium versus non-consumers.

"One hundred percent fruit juice plays an important role in the diets of children and teens, supplying important nutrients during a key period of growth and development," notes lead researcher Dr. Carol O'Neil.

"Drinking 100 percent juice should be encouraged as part of an overall [balanced diet](#)."

The analyses also revealed that mean consumption of fruit juice was well within the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommended intake levels of 4 to 6 ounces per day for children age 1 to 6 years and 8 to 12 ounces per day for [children](#) age 7 to 18 years.

Provided by Kellen Communications

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