

Nutrition Matters

Fruit Juice or Fruit Drink – What’s the Difference?


Do you use fruit drinks or punches to save money? You may be surprised to see that the prices of drinks and real juices are very similar.


While the prices of drinks and juices are similar, not much else about them is! Many of the fruit drinks are mostly sugar, artificial colours and flavours. Some fruit drinks may be fortified with vitamin C, or they may contain some real fruit juice, but they still do not contain the potassium, B vitamins and other nutrients naturally present in 100% fruit juice. So choose the product with the word “juice” on it to make sure you are getting the real thing!

Anything called “drink”, “beverage”, “punch,” “-ade,” “cocktail,” or “delight”, usually contain very little fruit juice. In fact, these products mainly contain sugar and water.



This is an example of what you might pay for juices:

<i>Orange Juice</i>					<i>Orange Drink</i>	
	Orange Juice – Ready to Serve	Orange Juice – Frozen Concentrate	Orange Juice – Frozen Concentrate with Calcium	Orange Juice – Tetra-Pak	Frozen Punch	Tetra-Pak cocktails and punches
Price as Purchased	\$2.15/ 1.89L	\$1.07/ 1.42L	\$1.14/ 1.42L	\$1.08/ 3 x 250mL	\$0.52/ 1.39L	\$1.10/ 3x 250mL
Cost Per Serving (125 mL or 1/2 cup)	14 cents	10 cents	10 cents	18 cents	5 cents	17 cents

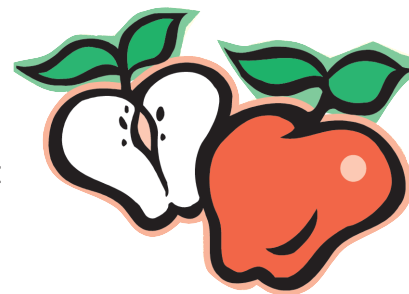
<i>Other Fruit Juices</i>					<i>Other Fruit Drinks</i>	
	Apple Juice – Ready to Serve	Grapefruit Juice – Ready to Serve	Tomato Juice – Ready to Serve	Cranberry Grape Juice – Ready to Serve	Kool-Aid and Tang Crystals	Cranberry-Grape Cocktail
Price as Purchased	\$1.22/ 1.36L	\$3.49/ 1.89L	\$1.42/ 1.36L	\$4.15/ 1.89L	\$1.28/ 2.25L	\$2.99/ 1.89L
Cost Per Serving (125 mL or 1/2 cup)	11 cents	23 cents	14 cents	27 cents	7 cents	20 cents

*Brands used in the pricing of the juices and drinks include: No Name, President’s Choice, Minute Maid, Old South, Smart Choice, D’Angelo, Tropicana, Heinz, Del Monte, Ocean Spray, McCain. Prices were obtained from Loblaw and Price Choppers grocery stores. Prices may vary from store to store.

Fruit Juice or Fruit Drink, *continued*

So, for almost the same price, why not buy fruit juice? It is a nutritionally acceptable snack and a far better alternative than fruit drink. As well, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 ml) of fruit juice counts as one serving from the Vegetables and Fruit food group of *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*.

To make sure you're buying the real thing, check the label. By law, a drink that is not 100% fruit juice must be labeled "drink" or "punch" and not "juice." Don't be fooled by drink labels saying "contains real fruit juice".



JUICE SAFETY

Most fruit juices and cider from grocery store shelves or freezers are pasteurized. This means that the liquid has been brought to a high temperature that kills harmful bacteria. However, a small percentage of fresh juices and ciders, commonly sold at roadside stands, country fairs, juice bars and on ice or in refrigerated display cases at grocery stores, are unpasteurized. This means that there is



a chance the product may contain bacteria harmful to your health. Most people can enjoy unpasteurized juice, however, for young children, the elderly and

people with weakened immune systems, the effect can be severe or even deadly. In August, 2000, Health Canada passed a policy requiring unpasteurized juices and ciders to be labeled.

THE BOTTOM LINE...

For about 10¢ per serving, you can buy real orange juice from frozen concentrate, or you can buy a "drink" or "punch". The juice provides a serving from the Vegetables and Fruit food group while the "punch" or "drink" does not. Look for the word "juice" in the name of the product for a choice that will contribute to an overall healthy eating pattern. The new nutrition information on food labels will help you compare the nutritional values of different juices of comparable serving sizes.

