

Can Juicing really lead to happiness?

By Dr Mercola www.mercola.com

Do you want more energy? Maybe drop a couple of sizes? Do you want to improve your health? Look years younger? Give your immune system a boost? If so, then it's time to consider juicing.

I have previously written an [extensive guide to juicing](#) but Cherie Calbom, the original Juice Lady, released the third edition of her best-selling book *The Juice Lady's Guide To Juicing for Health: Unleashing the Healing Power of Whole Fruits and Vegetables* in October 2008.

I recently spoke with her about what she learned in preparation for her new book. The most remarkable news from the juicing world is in the area of clinical research, offering mounting scientific evidence for juicing's health benefits.

One notable study explored the effects of [beetroot juice on blood pressure](#). Those who consumed 20 ounces of beetroot juice started to show reductions in blood pressure after just one hour. After about 2.5 hours, all participants who had the juice began to show significant reductions in both their systolic and diastolic readings.

Another significant study called the [Kame Project](#) concluded that fruits and vegetables might play an important role in delaying the onset of Alzheimer's disease. People who drank juices (fruit and vegetable) more than three times per week, compared to less than once a week, were 76 percent less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.

Many more studies have yielded positive findings, which are nicely outlined in Cherie's book. The research is just confirming what you already know—that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can greatly improve your fitness and vitality.

Why Should You Juice?

You might think that you can get the same benefits by eating your veggies whole, why go through the trouble of juicing them?

According to Cherie, *juice is therapeutic*. It is a nutrient-dense "living" broth that is absorbed almost instantly, requiring little effort by your body. It is almost like receiving an intravenous infusion of vitamins, minerals, and enzymes that goes right into your system without having to be broken down. Since it can be utilized

by your body immediately, those who juice report feeling the “kick” of energy almost instantly.

This is not to suggest replacing all your veggies and fruits with juice. Juicing is a *supplement* to your diet, and you need the insoluble fiber from whole foods as well. But juicing is a fantastic way to pack in more vegetables than you would ordinarily eat.

Speaking of fiber, you might be surprised to know that juice actually contains some fiber—of the soluble variety. Soluble fiber is present in juice in the form of pectin, gums, and mucilage. This soluble fiber helps lower your cholesterol, stabilize blood sugar, and encourages good bowel bacteria.

Juicing concentrates the most nutrient-dense parts of the plants in the juice. In the past, some have claimed that a significant amount of nutrients remained in the fiber after juicing, but that theory has been disproved. The Department of Agriculture analyzed twelve fruits and found that 90 percent of the antioxidant activity was in the juice, rather than the fiber.

Making your own juice allows you to use a wider variety of vegetables, leaves, and stems that you might not otherwise eat, expanding your range of nutrients.

Raw juice also contains something very special—biophotonic light energy—which revitalizes your body. Fresh, raw juice is a “live food” with a full complement of vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals and enzymes. Commercially processed, canned, bottled, frozen or otherwise packaged juices have been pasteurized, meaning the juice has been exposed to high temperatures, and many of the vitamins and enzymes have been killed or removed.

The light of “living juice” has actually been seen with Kirlian photography. Kirlian photos of cooked vegetables and pasteurized juice reveal very little “light” emanating from them.

One very important benefit of juicing has to do with alkalizing your body. Most people’s bodies are too acidic. Nearly all who suffer from chronic illness have this acidity problem. Vegetables are alkaline, so when you juice, it will raise the pH of your body to a more beneficial level.

Remember, as good as juicing is, you still need to pay attention to your nutritional type, in terms of how much juice to consume daily, and what kind. You might want to review my guidelines about [juicing for each nutritional type](#) before employing juicing into your food plan. For tips on choosing a juicer, my [juicer page](#) might helpful.

The Top Three Benefits of Juicing

Cherie shared her thoughts about what she considers to be the top three benefits of juicing:

1. Weight management
2. Increased energy
3. Boosted immune system

Over the years, thousands of readers have emailed the Juice Lady with their personal stories and experiences of juicing. One of the things she has been most struck by is the “side effect” reported in literally hundreds of emails—significant weight loss.

This weight loss is experienced not only by people who have that as a goal, but also by those who do not. Many—in fact, the majority—of people start juicing as a way to improve their health and energy. But even these folks have noticed the pounds “falling off,” as she described it. People from all over the world have written her about this phenomenon.

She suggests this may be a result of the fact that acids are stored in fat cells, and when the pH becomes better balanced with alkaline foods such as vegetable juices, your body will let go of fat cells and the acids they contain. I would also add that people who are juicing are likely eating less processed food and junk food, feeling better and having more energy, and as a result are more active, which would contribute to shedding excess pounds. When your body has an abundance of the nutrients it needs, and the pH is optimally balanced, you do feel energized.

Juicing can supercharge your immune system with its concentration of beneficial phytochemicals. Phytochemicals are the substances plants contain that protect them from disease, injury and pollution. For example, the average tomato contains up to 10,000 different types of phytochemicals, the most famous being lycopene, which has been shown to lower the risk of stomach and prostate cancer.

Research has shown that people whose diets are highest in phytonutrients (ie, plants) have the lowest incidence of cancer and other diseases, and raw juices give you these vital substances in concentrated form. Here are just a few of the immune-boosting plant heroes and what they do for you:

- Allyl sulfides, found in garlic and onions, have been found to lower your risk for stomach cancer
- Curcumins, present in ginger and turmeric, stimulate the activity of glutathione S-transferases, which are thought to be cancer inhibitors
- Ellagic acid, found in grapes and strawberries, neutralizes carcinogenic agents, preventing them from altering cellular DNA (a first step in the development of cancer)
- Gingerol, from ginger, has been shown to reduce inflammation, lower cholesterol, and heal ulcers
- Monoterpenes, found in cherries, have been found to lower the risk of breast, skin, liver, lung, stomach, and pancreatic cancer

Choose Organic Produce

The popularity of organic produce has increased dramatically over the years, and for good reason. Not only do you avoid the health-damaging pesticides and herbicides--which get concentrated in your juice just as the good nutrients do--but organic produce has now been shown by a number of studies to be more nutritious than inorganic produce.

A [\\$25-million four-year study of organic food](#), funded by the European Union, found that organic fruits and vegetables contain up to 40 percent more antioxidants. Organic produce had higher levels of beneficial minerals like iron and zinc. In fact, the milk from organically raised cows contains 60 percent more antioxidants and fatty acids than ordinary milk.

[Another study](#), this one a doctoral dissertation by Virginia Worthington at John Hopkins University in 2001, revealed:

- 27 percent more vitamin C in organic produce than in the conventionally grown vegetables
- 21 percent more iron
- 29 percent more magnesium
- 13 percent more phosphorous, and
- 15 percent fewer nitrates

There should be no remaining doubt that buying organic produce is well worth the effort and additional cost. If you can't buy all organic, be sure to at least avoid the "[Dirty Dozen](#)."