



LESSON 20: "JUICING 101"

What is juicing?

Juicing fruits and vegetables means removing their fiber in order to extract their juice.

Why (not) juice?

By removing the fiber, you essentially also skip digesting the food. Our bodies prioritize digestion over detoxification, so the less you impact your digestive system, the more your body can detoxify and rest. Juicing also allows you to consume a very concentrated amount of nutrients in a very short time. More than most people would consume if they were to eat the fruits and vegetables by themselves (simply because they wouldn't be able to consume the high amounts of produce it takes to make juice). That being said, fruits and vegetables contain fiber for a reason. It's essential for proper digestion and makes sure fructose enters the blood stream slowly. That is why juicing is great as an addition to a whole foods plant-based diet or during a temporary cleanse, but it shouldn't replace whole foods all of the time.

Which juicer should you use?

For most citrus juice, a simple citrus press will do, but for any other juice, you'll need a juicer. There are different types of juicers: centrifuges and slow juicers. Juice bars or juice companies often use a bigger machine referred to as an industrial cold press. A centrifuge system uses a high speed motor to quickly extract the juice. Because it is so fast, the motor generates heat (which technically speaking means that the juice is no longer fully raw). Because of that heat, oxidization and consequently, a higher loss of nutrients occurs. Centrifuge juicers that are on the cheaper end also tend to extract a little less juice overall. Slow juicers, on the other hands, use a masticating system, literally pressing the juice out of the fruits and vegetables by crushing or "masticating" them. They extract more juice and are generally considered better, but they're unfortunately also more expensive. They also require more time and the juice will need to be strained (with a strainer or nut-milk bag) if you want it to be completely fiber-free.

Centrifuge juicers can also have advantages over slow juicers and the answer to "which juicer should I get?" isn't quite as simple to answer. I like to look at it this way: the best juicer is the one you're going to use. So, before buying a juicer, there

are a few questions you may want to ask yourself so that you can make the most informed decision:

1. Do you really need a juicer? / When is it worth investing in a juicer?

How often will you be using the juicer? If you know that you are planning a juice cleanse or you want to incorporate juices into your daily routine (or at least have juice a few times a week), then I'd say it's definitely worth it. Most high quality juices at juice bars cost around \$8-12 for 16fl.oz. (0.5L), which may be OK occasionally, but can quickly become very expensive. High quality organic juices cost that much because of the high volume of produce, the production and transportation cost, as well as labor, packaging, rent etc. that is involved.

I wanted to know how much exactly I would save if I made my own juices and if it would justify investing in a pricier juicer. Buying produce in bulk and prioritizing local and seasonal fruits and vegetables, I was able to make my own juice for about \$3.3-\$5 per 16fl.oz. (0.5L). If you're doing a juice cleanse, consuming on average 6 juices a day, that'll save you about 50-70% compared to what you'd be paying at a juice bar. So, if you're planning on making a lot of juice, then yes, investing in a juicer is worth it, but if you're planning on buying a cheap juicer because you only want to make juice very occasionally, it might be smarter to skip the juicer and get your occasional juice at a juice bar, since the quality will be much higher.

2. What is your budget?

Let's face it, higher quality items are often (but not always) more expensive, but that doesn't mean that you have to miss out or that cheaper products aren't good at all. A juicer can cost anything from \$30 to over \$2,000 for a smaller cold press juicer (industrial cold press juicers are in the 20K range). Most commonly sold (and good) centrifuges cost around 70/80-150 and up. Slow juicers usually cost \$200-\$500, although you can find some for around \$100. If you believe that a juicer will help you and you want to invest in a higher quality slow juicer, it might be worth looking into payment plans (QVC has them for instance). If payment plans are not an option for you, then a centrifuge will still be better than no juicer.

3. What is important to you? (quality? time needed? easy to use and clean?)

Price is not the only reason a centrifuge might actually be better for you. If you're extremely busy, this system will save you a lot more time and like I mentioned above, the best juicer is the one you'll actually use. An expensive juicer won't serve you at all if it remains unused. Another important aspect is how easy to clean the juicer is. This one is tricky as all companies will claim that their juicers are both easy to use and easy to clean. The best way to find out if that is true is to read customer reviews online (on Amazon, for instance). Also take into consideration how much space the juicer takes up as some models are significantly bigger than others, so be sure to look for the dimensions in the product description.

Can you juice without a juicer?

Yes. You can blend the fruits and vegetables and then strain them using a nut-milk bag (this will NOT work using a strainer), BUT this will take a lot of time and I'd only recommend this an occasional or temporary solution, not longterm (unless you don't mind the process). The best way to find out if this method suits you is to try it. One juice that can easily be made this way is watermelon juice (which is one of the only juices you could actually also use a strainer for since the water content is so high and there won't be as much fiber to remove). Add some fresh mint leaves and ice cubes to the glass or jar after straining to make it even more refreshing.

What can you juice?

Only certain fruits and vegetables are suited for juicing. Technically speaking, you could juice any kind of produce, but it's smarter to choose those that taste good AND yield a lot of juice. Bell peppers taste great when juiced, but they don't yield a lot of juice, so while they're amazing in salads, dips and raw soups, they're not ideal for juicing. The same goes for kiwis, peaches, persimmons, bananas, mangoes and strawberries (all of those are great in smoothies though).

Fruits that are great for juicing: apples, pears, citrus (oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruits), grapes, pineapples, watermelons.

Vegetables that are great for juicing: carrots, celery, lettuce, fennel, cucumbers, sweet potatoes (I don't use those in juice too often though as don't like them quite as much when juiced), beets, kale, spinach.

Other:

Roots: ginger and turmeric are wonderful enhancers, just make sure you don't use too much at once since they have a rather intense taste.

Herbs: some of the best are basil, parsley, cilantro. You obviously won't get much juice out of those, but their taste is strong enough to give your juice a little extra boost.

What fruit-veggie ratios should you use?

This is the trickiest part. The greener the juice, the better. Generally speaking, I'd say that if you just want to juice fruit, you might be better off eating the fruit instead of juicing it. The fiber in the fruit ensures the fructose enters your system slowly. Without any fiber, you might feel a bit of a sugar rush (keep in mind that fructose is not comparable to refined sugar though, so even if you do, it wouldn't be nearly as bad as drinking soda with sugar in it). There are exceptions like orange juice that still has the pulp in it (which contains fiber) or watermelon juice that is very high in water. Adding greens to your juices will help you make sure that your juices are just sweet enough for them to taste good, but not too sweet and full of extra minerals and vitamins. If you don't need any sweetness, feel free to juice greens and other vegetables by themselves. For a 32fl.oz jar of juice, about 2-3 apples combined with leafy greens and vegetables is perfect. Ultimately, you're the only one who knows how sweet you want your juice to be, so you can experiment with the amounts.

What about store-bought juice?

Some stores sell freshly squeezed orange, grapefruit or apple juice, which is totally fine to consume. The first thing you should look at is the expiration date. If it's truly fresh, it shouldn't have a shelf life of more than a few days. Also read the juice description carefully and make sure you avoid juice that is made "from concentrate" or "sweetened" (fruit juice is sweet enough, it shouldn't require added refined sugar). Another thing to be careful about is Vitamin D enriched juice. If it's been enriched with D3 that usually means it contains animal products as vegan D3 is more difficult to find. If the juices are labeled "cold-pressed", then they're usually fresh.

Should you do a juice cleanse? And if yes, for how long?

The short answer is: yes, but only if you want to. A juice cleanse is not something you *need* to do. Your body detoxifies itself, no food can do that in its place. Cleanses and products that claim to be detoxifying can actually help you detoxify, but only because they replace processed foods and therefore allow your body to catch a break and do the actual work. Detoxification is inevitable, your body does it all the time. The intensity of it just varies depending on the amount of toxins it is being exposed to. The less toxins it has to deal with, the more time it can spend cleansing and healing itself. This means that you can achieve similar results to those of a juice cleanse by simply removing processed foods and eating a clean diet. Juicing will, however, seem more intense since you're additionally removing all the fiber. If you hate the feeling of not eating at all, don't torture yourself unnecessarily, it's really not everyone's cup of tea and that's OK. Juicing can, however, feel great to some people. I personally do it even more for the mental than the physical benefits. It feels good to not even have to think about food for a while and it puts me in a positive mind frame. Another added bonus is that I always start craving healthier foods more than desserts or processed foods.

How long should you do a juice cleanse for (if you decide you want to give it a try)?

5–7 days is ideal as it's long enough for you to get over the adaptation or “detox” phase (there is no blueprint, but for many people this lasts 1–3 days), but not so long that it will require tremendous effort and or willpower, which doesn't mean it'll be the easiest thing you'll ever do either. If you're planning a longer juice fast and/or a juice fast for health reasons, please consult a health practitioner beforehand.

Should you exercise during a juice cleanse?

Technically, you could, as you're still consuming calories and will therefore have the energy to do so. That being said, the more you rest during the cleanse, the greater the benefits. If you're feeling overly tired, it's better to allow yourself to sleep an extra couple of hours than to exercise. Remember that cleanses like these should only ever be temporary, so you won't miss out by not exercising for a few days. If you want to keep moving, going for an outdoor walk or something light like restorative Yoga or Tai Chi is ideal. Many people do juice cleanses to lose weight quickly and believe that adding a rigorous workout routine will help them achieve their goals

even faster. A “quick fix” or short diets rarely ever work because people go right back to their old eating and lifestyle habits. Look at a juice cleanse not like a diet, but more like a mini vacation for your body, a reset if you will, so you can slowly but surely incorporate healthier habits into your day to day life and ensure longterm results.

How much juice should you drink during a cleanse and should you drink anything else besides juice?

Most people drink about 3 liters of juice a day on a cleanse, either in 6 smaller batches or 1 liter three times a day at meal times (I prefer the latter). The juice is hydrating enough for you not to need extra water, but feel free to drink as much of it as you want/need. It helps curb any hunger feelings you might experience in between your juices. You can also add herbal tea, just try to avoid caffeinated beverages.

Incorporating juicing in your day to day life

The best way to start including fresh juices on a daily (or weekly) basis is by having a green juice before breakfast. If you want to have a juice to replace a meal, you can do that too, but you’ll need to make sure it’s big enough so that you get sufficient calories. A 32fl.oz. (about 1L) juice has about 400 calories (the exact amount varies depending on the fruit-veggie ratio). Try to enjoy juices before heavier meals rather than after. They digest much more quickly and it’ll therefore be better for your digestive system.

Documentary Tip

If this has sparked your curiosity and you’d like to find out more about juicing, I’d highly recommend the documentary *Fat Sick and Nearly Dead* (and its sequel *Fat Sick and Nearly Dead II*) by Joe Cross (it’s available on Netflix). Joe decided to do a juice cleanse for health reasons and combined his experience with a road trip throughout the United States. A truly inspiring documentary.