Fruit vs. Fruit Juice

Canada’s Food Guide
Canadians should get 7-10 servings of vegetables and fruits daily, and juice is currently included in this group. If the Food Guide counts juice in this group, does it mean that the nutritional quality is the same in juice and whole fruit?

Health Canada recently announced that they will be doing a scientific review of whether they should remove fruit juice from Canada’s Food Guide. The Food Guide already recommends choosing whole vegetables and fruits more often than juice, but for now it still counts ½ cup of juice as 1 serving of vegetables and fruit.

Are Whole Fruits Really Healthier?
Sugar and fiber are the two main reasons why whole fruits are healthier than juice. Whole fruit has more fiber and less sugar per serving than juice. Fiber has many benefits, including keeping you feeling full and helping manage cholesterol levels. Excess sugar intake is linked to many chronic health conditions.

Many fruit juices (including 100% fruit juices with “no added sugar”) contain as much sugar as regular pop! Even vegetable juices often have a lot of added sodium.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation considers fruit drinks and juice as sugar-loaded beverages (just like pop and energy drinks) and recommends avoiding them for better health. Check out their position statement on Sugar, Heart Disease and Stroke: http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.ikIQLcMWJtE/b.9201361/k.47CB/Sugar_heart_disease_and_stroke.htm

For a video clip showing how much whole fruit you would have to eat to equal the sugar in a few cups of juice visit: http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/blog/fruits-vs-fruit-juice

Marketing
The juice industry continues to promote juice as a healthy choice. The Canadian Beverage Association maintains that without juice most people wouldn’t be getting enough fruit and vegetable intake and would be lacking in essential nutrients.

Marketing has also tried to make juice sound healthy by labeling it: Cold pressed, 100% natural, 100% fruit juice, garden fresh, no added sugar etc. Although these might sound like healthy foods, they still contain excess sugar and limited fiber.

Just remember that if you get your 7-10 servings of vegetables and fruit daily from a variety of whole foods you will be getting all the vitamins and minerals you need.

Bottom line: Eat WHOLE vegetables and fruits daily & enjoy juices occasionally!
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References:
1. http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/blog/fruits-vs-fruit-juice