

Chapter 1

Energizing Your Health with Juices and Smoothies

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Welcome to a healthier life through juicing and smoothies. With this book, you can regain your natural energy or life force by eating and especially by drinking to be well. Energy is the basic force throughout all of nature that drives life. It starts at the cellular level. To nourish the cells and live life at optimum health, you need four essential components: sleep, air, water, and nutrients.

You can get those nutrients from a variety of sources, but you get the most bang for your buck with whole, organic foods. Whole foods offer a wide variety of nutrients, including phytonutrients; not only are they a source of soluble and insoluble fiber, but also they're relatively low in fat. Whole, organic foods are unprocessed and unrefined, not chemically treated, and they're in as pure a state as possible when you eat them. Whole foods are fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, lentils, nuts, seeds, and herbs. In addition to these foods, a whole foods diet may include small amounts of unprocessed meat and dairy products.

Juices and smoothies offer immediate results and a gigantic step along the path toward health and wellness through whole foods. If you own a blender, you can start today and with very little money, time, or effort, you'll have more energy, improved digestion and elimination, a stronger immune system, a better memory, and healthy skin and nails — and you'll likely lose some weight, too.

This chapter serves as your starting point to the world of juices and smoothies. When you begin energizing your health through smoothies and juicing, you'll feel positively charged and fully able to take whatever life has to offer.

Drinking Your Energy and Health in a Glass

Opting to make your own smoothies and juices means that you're making a fresh start. Commercial juices and smoothies, whether purchased at your grocery store or at a juice bar, are still better for you than junk food and soft drinks, but making your own allows you to be in total control of what goes into the drink. You can save money and still buy organic, fresh fruits and vegetables that are at their peak of ripeness and, thus, bursting with optimum nutrients.

Reaching for a glass of homemade juice or a smoothie means that you can stop taking commercial supplements unless a doctor has prescribed these supplements. You'll save money and get more of your daily nutrient requirements by drinking two or more pure fruit or vegetable drinks every day. The advantage of consuming whole fruits and vegetables is that they contain so many complementary nutrients and trace elements, not just the major ones such as vitamin C or A. These super phytonutrients help the body metabolize or use the vitamins or minerals that you may not be able to absorb from a particular food or a commercial supplement, and they help to boost their effectiveness.

Commercial supplements that have isolated one or two nutrients lack all the other substances that occur naturally in whole foods and that allow the body to fully use them. For example, if you were taking a multivitamin with 10 mg of iron and it didn't have enough vitamin C and calcium to assist the body in taking up and using that iron, the iron would pass through your body virtually unused.



My advice for complete and optimum healthy living in a glass is to drink the rainbow twice a day. Try to include as wide a variety as possible of the vibrant and colorful fruits and vegetables available to you. This approach ensures that you're getting the best and the most nutrients that nature offers. And if you drink two or more glasses of juice or smoothies every day, you'll be providing your body with a continuous replenishment of nutrients that are lost in normal daily living. Think of your body as a bank: If you deposit only lower value coins (or empty calories), you won't have the cash (or energy) to do the things you want. Worse still, eventually, you won't have the reserves to defend yourself against a tough economy (bacteria and deadly diseases).

Eating well and adding two or more fresh juices or smoothies to your daily routine will top up your nutrient reserves all day long so that you'll actually

notice a change in your energy and physical well-being. Take a peek at what you can expect from healthy living in a glass:

- ✔ **Energy to burn:** Your cells are nourished (or not) from the food you consume. By flooding your tissues with the pure nutrients that they need to function and stay healthy, you keep them strong and able to throw off minor colds and flu, which means that after a short period of time, you actually will feel energized.
- ✔ **Glowing skin:** Collagen is made up of proteins that forms the glue used by the body to connect and support tissues such as skin, bone, tendons, muscles, organs, teeth, gums, and cartilage. Vitamin C is essential in building collagen. Fruits and vegetables high in vitamin C — citrus fruit, strawberries, cabbage, and peppers — are essential for healthy skin. Vitamin A, found in apricots, carrots, spinach, and squash, protects the skin from sun damage. Skin cells are protected from aging by Vitamin E, found in dark green leafy vegetables, wheat germ, and nuts and seeds.
- ✔ **Bright eyes:** Beta-carotene, as found in the carotenoids of fruits and vegetables, is converted to retinol by the body. *Retinol* protects the surface of the eye, or the *cornea*, and is essential for good vision. Vitamin A is so important to your eyes that a deficiency (rare in developed countries) results in blindness.
- ✔ **Buff bones:** In the United States, 40 million or more people have osteoporosis or are at high risk for low bone mass, according to the National Institutes of Health. Among several other things, a diet low in calcium and vitamin D will make you more prone to bone loss. This is something you can totally control by including calcium-rich foods in smoothies and getting lots of fresh air and sunlight for vitamin D. Dark green leafy vegetables, beans, tofu, sesame seeds, and sea vegetables contain lots of usable calcium. Dairy products have calcium with vitamin D added; yogurt, milk, eggs, and cheese are good sources of vitamin D.

Jumping into Juicing

Although the water or juice of mainly fruits has been enjoyed for centuries, it wasn't until the beginning of the 20th century that two men began to look at raw juice as a medical cure. Called the *Roshåft Kur*, or raw juice cure, it was revolutionary at the time, and its developers, Dr. Max Bircher-Benner and Dr. Max Gerson, used it to promote health and well-being for patients suffering from fatigue and stress.

Just about everyone living in the 21st century suffers from fatigue and stress at some point. And raw juicing would be a quick and positive step toward repairing the damage to cells from modern-day stress.



Food flows through your gastrointestinal tract, which extends from your mouth to your bowels, and must be absorbed through the walls of the stomach and intestines before it can enter the bloodstream. Like most things associated with the body, *assimilation* (absorption of nutrients) is complicated. For total transport of nutrients through the intestinal cell wall, key enzymes and minor nutrients must be present. Once absorbed, nutrients circulate to and feed all your tissues by way of your blood. Nutrients, which are tiny molecules, are bound up in the larger cells of carbohydrate, and they're in the water or juice of fruits and vegetables. When you juice, you remove the fiber and cellulose tissue in order to leave the pure water and nutrients. In fact, by juicing, you're performing critical steps in the digestive process, which would normally start by chewing to break down the flesh of fruits and vegetables. All the nutrients in juice are instantly available for moving into the blood and, in fact, they're completely taken up and on their way to repair cells within 10 to 20 minutes of drinking them. They save the body from doing digestive work — the gallbladder, pancreas, and stomach from excreting bile and digestive enzymes and the liver from separating toxins.

A brief history of juicing

The Dead Sea Scrolls have revealed that mashing pomegranate and figs for “profound strength and subtle form” was practiced from before 150 B.C. This is perhaps the first record of man’s attempt to separate the vital juices from fruits and vegetables for their healing benefits.

Throughout the ages, herbalists and other health practitioners have grated or ground fresh herbs and soft fruits and pressed the juice along with the healing, active constituents from them. Dr. Max Gerson was the first to put forth the concept that diet could be used as cancer (and other disease) therapy, but it wasn’t until the 1930s, when author and raw food proponent Dr. Norman Walker invented the first juicing machine, that juicing became widely available. Cumbersome and yet effective, Walker’s machine, called the Norwalk, first grates and squeezes fruits and vegetables.

The pulp is placed into a linen bag and pressed using a hydraulic press. The first of its kind and still available, the Norwalk allowed ordinary people to effectively extract the juice from fruit and vegetables.

Around the mid-1950s, the Champion machine, the first masticating juicer, was invented. The high speed (4,000 rpm) of the turning rod causes friction, which heats the juice and destroys the live enzymes and other nutrients.

In 1993, the world’s first twin-gear juice extractor, called the Greenpower juicer, was produced. It’s based on the old mortar-and-pestle method of pressing out the maximum living nutrients from fruits and vegetables without losing them to heat.

Today, many great makes and models of juicing machines are available.



Juices are the fastest and easiest way for the body to take up the nutrients it needs to feed and detoxify itself.

If you want to jump-start your adventure into health, jump into juicing. Today's juice machines are leaps ahead of the juicers of years ago. Chapter 3 fills you in on how to buy and care for equipment, but for now, trust me that juicing at home is more economical, faster, cleaner, and more convenient than ever before.

Savoring Smoothies

Smoothies are the darlings of the healthy-drink world. They taste divine; they can be as nutritious as a salad and as satisfying as a light lunch; they're so easy to make, drink, and clean up after; and they enrich the diet without adding too many calories or unwanted fat. Who wouldn't want to savor them?

Beyond the basics of fruit and fruit juice ingredients, smoothies are exciting in their range of possibilities and are limited only by your imagination. Although fruit smoothies are the most popular by far, vegetable smoothies can be just as rewarding, and adding milk or organic soy boosts protein and calcium.

Smoothies are a delicious, guilt-free alternative to high-sugar, high-calorie iced drinks. For people who love iced-coffee drinks, milkshakes, and the like, smoothies make the transition to healthier drinks easy. You don't need to feel deprived, and you don't have to sacrifice taste and texture while enjoying maximum health benefits. Make antioxidant iced smoothies with frozen berries, bananas or other fruit, and iced drinks (see Chapter 19) and save money while actually doing something healthy for your body.

With dairy ingredients, nuts and seeds, legumes, herbs, and protein supplements, smoothies can be used as the occasional meal replacement (see the breakfast, snack, lunch, and dinner smoothies in Chapters 16 and 17). Check out the incredible ingredients that you can add to smoothies in Chapter 15.

Here are a couple of the benefits you can enjoy by using herbs in smoothies:

- ✔ **Enhanced energy:** The American Cancer Society acknowledges that ginseng is used to provide energy, among other things. One teaspoon of powdered ginseng in smoothies no more than twice a day is all you need.
- ✔ **Improved memory:** Ginkgo biloba increases blood flow to the brain and is widely used in Europe for treating dementia; through studies, the University of Maryland Medical Center reports that ginkgo positively effects memory and thinking in people with Alzheimer's or vascular dementia. You can add drops of the tincture or stir a teaspoon of the powdered ginkgo into smoothies.

A brief history of smoothies

Around the turn of the 20th century, soda fountain jerks were hand-tossing stainless steel cups of creamy milkshakes from milk, ice cream, and flavored syrups. But the fruit smoothie hadn't even been thought of yet, nor was it possible until Fred Waring marketed Steve Poplawski's new invention, which came to be known as a *blender*.

The blender was first sold to drugstores with soda fountains and to bars and restaurants with bars. Milkshakes were the first drinks to be made in the new blender machines. These new machines didn't come to be used on the beaches of California until around the mid-1960s. The earliest fruit smoothies were thick, frozen drinks made from orange juice, strawberries, and ice, and although they shared the electric blender in common with the longer-standing milkshake, smoothies were a completely different drink aimed at cooling

and refreshing beach-goers. Catering to the resurgence of macrobiotic vegetarianism in the United States, restaurants added smoothies to their menus, and the drink spread around the country.

Many commercial products have evolved since the late 1960s, and now the word *smoothie* is generic, meaning a thick drink blended from fruit juice and fruit. Today the international smoothie industry is a multibillion-dollar revenue generator with new drinks sporting supplements and herbal tinctures along with other healing substances.

Cookbook authors (like me) have expanded the smoothie category to include vegetables and dairy, bringing it right back to the milkshake. But the true smoothie will always be the icy cold fruit juice, fresh fruit, and ice beach quencher.

I like to savor fruit smoothies made from fresh local fruit in the morning. I've found that if I add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of low-fat cottage cheese or yogurt, it gives me the protein I need for staying focused right up until about an hour before lunch. That's when I make a vegetable juice as a sort of appetizer, which keeps me satiated and allows me to make really good choices about the lunch I'll have. In this way, I've found a rhythm to getting the most out of juices and smoothies.