

PREVENTION

WELLNESS

5 MYTHS ABOUT

FRUIT

Even the earth's most nutritious treats have been battered and bruised by Internet misinformation. Take a bite of these juicy truths.

BY KATE ROCKWOOD



Association (ADA). “I’ve been a registered dietitian for over 40 years, and of the thousands of patients I have coun-

seled, no one has gained weight by eating too much fruit,” says Leslie Bonci, R.D., owner of Active Eating Advice.

MYTH:

Eating fruit is bad for weight loss.

MYTHBUSTER

The opposite is true: A study that followed more than 130,000 adults over 24 years found that eating more fruit was connected with *increased* weight loss. (This was especially true for people who ate more apples, berries, and pears.) “Most fruit contains no fat, is low in calories, can be high in fiber, and adds natural sweetness to a meal or snack,” says Toby Smithson, a certified diabetes care and education specialist and senior manager of nutrition and wellness at the American Diabetes

MYTH:

You should limit your fruit intake because of all the sugar it has.

MYTHBUSTER

Fruit’s sugar doesn’t affect you in the same way as the added sugar in foods like cakes and sugary cereals. “The sugar in fruit comes with fiber, vitamins, and minerals,” says LeeAnn Weintraub, R.D., a nutrition consultant in Los Angeles. Fiber protects your heart, boosts digestion, and keeps you feeling fuller longer. The fiber in fruit also slows down sugar’s absorption into the bloodstream—that’s why fruit doesn’t spike your blood sugar the way a bowl of sugary cereal or ice cream would. That’s good, as consistently elevated blood sugar levels are connected with health issues like type 2 diabetes. Research also suggests that eating more fruits (and veggies) is linked to a lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease. Go ahead and enjoy at least 1½ to 2 cups of fruit a day (and cut down on added sugar!).

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MYTH:

Fresh fruit is much healthier than frozen or canned.

MYTHBUSTER

Fresh fruit and frozen fruit have virtually the same nutrient content, research has found.

In fact, frozen fruit sometimes contains more nutrients because it's picked at peak ripeness and then blanched and flash frozen, which lets it hang on to most of its nutrients.

For example, frozen blueberries and raspberries have more polyphenols than fresh fruit, one report found. And while canned fruit tends to have slightly less vitamin C than fresh or frozen fruit, the amount of soluble fiber is roughly the same, as is the amount of nutrients and vitamins, says Bonci. Choose fruit canned in water or its own juices to avoid added sugar and sodium.

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NOT**MYTH:**

People with diabetes shouldn't eat fruit.

MYTHBUSTER

Fruit can actually help people with diabetes manage the disease. Studies have found that folks who ate more fruit had lower fasting blood sugar levels, and that eating more flavonoids—good-for-you compounds found in plants—reduced the risk of diabetes-related vision problems. The ADA recommends

that people with diabetes eat quality carbohydrates, “and fruit is a quality carbohydrate because it contains vitamins, minerals, and fiber,” Smithson says. That said, she recommends that those with the con-

dition pay attention to portion size, eat less dried fruit (in which sugar is more concentrated), and pair fruit with foods that contain slower-digesting fats or protein, such as peanut butter or cheese.





GETTY IMAGES

WELLNESS

5
NO

MYTH:

**Blending
fruit zaps
its nutrition.**

MYTHBUSTER

If you love a fruit smoothie, there's good news—blending doesn't make fruit any less healthy. "When you puree or blend whole fruit, nothing changes but the texture," Bonci says. It doesn't destroy fruit's fiber or any of its nutrients—in fact, blending can make the soluble fiber easier to digest, especially for people who experience gas or bloating after eating raw fruit. Just keep in mind, says Bonci, that when drinking fruit blended rather than eating it raw, it's easy to consume more than you think, and the fact that you don't have to chew can make the fruit seem less filling. Try giving your smoothie a protein boost with yogurt, protein powder, or peanut butter powder.

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