- Fruit

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.



MYTH #1

Eating fruit is bad for weight loss

THE TRUTH 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 kilojoules, can be high in fibre, and adds natural sweetness to a meal or snack," says Toby Smithson, a certified diabetes care and education specialist. Adds dietitian Leslie Bonci: "I've been a registered dietitian for more than 40 years, and of the thousands of patients I've counselled, no one has gained weight by eating too much fruit."

MYTH #2

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

THE TRUTH 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 fibre, vitamins and minerals," says dietitian LeeAnn Weintraub. Fibre protects your heart, boosts digestion and keeps you feeling fuller longer. The fibre 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 vegies) is linked to a lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease. Go ahead and enjoy at least one and a half to two cups of fruit a day (and cut down on added sugar!).

COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED • PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER • NOT FOR RESALE • PERSONAL COPY

COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED
PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE

MYTH #3

Fresh fruit is much healthier than frozen or tinned

THE TRUTH 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 snap frozen, which lets it hang on to most of its nutrients. For example, frozen blueberries and raspberries have more polyphenols (nutrients from plants) than fresh fruit, one report found. And while tinned fruit tends to have slightly less vitamin C than fresh or frozen fruit, the amount of soluble fibre is roughly the same, as is the amount of nutrients and vitamins, says Leslie. Choose fruit tinned in water or its own juices to avoid added sugar and sodium.



MYTH #4

People with diabetes shouldn't eat fruit

THE TRUTH Fruit can actually help people with diabetes manage the disease. Studies have found that those 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. Both Diabetes Australia and the National Diabetes Services Scheme recommend that people with diabetes eat quality carbohydrates, "and fruit is a quality carbohydrate because it contains vitamins, minerals and fibre," Toby says. That said, she recommends that those with the condition 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.

MYTH #5

Blending fruit in a blender zaps its nutrition

THE TRUTH If you love a fruit smoothie, there's good news – blending doesn't make fruit any less healthy. "When you purée or blend whole fruit, nothing changes but the texture," Leslie says. It doesn't destroy the fruit's fibre or any of its nutrients – in fact, blending can make the soluble fibre easier to digest, especially for people who experience gas or bloating after eating raw fruit. Just keep in mind, says Leslie, that when drinking blended fruit 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. The best fruit for smoothies? Top options include raspberries, blueberries and bananas. Try giving your smoothie a protein boost with yoghurt, protein powder or peanut butter powder. P

WORDS: KATE ROCKWOOD. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES