

5 DAY PACKET-FREE CHALLENGE – DAY 4: FRUIT



The Packet Free Challenge: Day 4

Today we're talking: FRUIT

So now we get to a topic upon which we as parents see as the saving grace of the lunchbox. That one part you know the kids will eat, that works so easily in a lunchbox that's naturally transportable and finger food ready made. #winning

Now for sure there is a LOT to love about fruit and I know you'll have heard about all it's benefits many many times over.

So the point of this email is not at all to demonise fruit but simply to ask you to pause and think of how it's working for you and your family. It might be that after reading this email you keep going exactly as you are now. Or, you might decide to modify the type and quantity of fruit you give your children. Much will depend of course on your particular circumstances.

Don't forget to [click here](#) to join the discussion!

Want the "in a nutshell" version of today's email?

Natural sugar is still sugar. Sugar that comes packed with vitamins and minerals is still sugar. And fruit is a concentrated form of sugar. So yes it's natural but it's still sugar to our kids bodies. That doesn't mean freak out about it. It doesn't mean don't eat it. But that does mean don't eat truck loads of it all year around and be mindful of what you do eat (just like anything you put in your body or your kid's bodies).

What about dried fruit and fruit juice?

In so far as dried fruit and fruit juice is concerned I would limit the former and ensure when you have it you're eating a quality source without the additives and preservatives (dried fruit often has been preserved in sulphites) and I would avoid fruit juice entirely.

Dried fruit is very high in sugar. It's far from the worst thing that your kids should be eating but it's also far from the most nutritious. The point isn't that dried fruit is "bad" just that it's very high in sugar and needs to be treated with care.

Other reasons for limiting dried fruit are:

- Not satiating - not filling in kids tummies more likely to leave kids craving more higher sugar products shortly after.
- Usually filled with industrial seed oils and other additives and preservatives.
- Can contribute to tooth decay when kids eat morning tea and have a sticky high sugar film sitting stuck on their teeth for the day.



Ribena
Blackcurrant
Fruit Drink
(250ml per serving)
6.4
TEASPOONS

Coca-Cola
(250ml per serving)
6.6
TEASPOONS

THAT
SUGAR
FILM

Are you a label detective?

Become a label detective: Yes sorry but you really can't rely on front of pack labelling as it can be so misleading - especially if you're in NZ or Australia with the

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF A DRIED FRUIT PRODUCT IN NZ:

Reconstituted Fruit Juice (66%) [Apple (62%), Strawberry (3%) or Lime (3%)], Glucose Syrup, Sugar, Beef gelatine, Food Acids (Citric Acid, Malc Acid, Gelling Agent (Pectin), Natural Flavours, Natural Colours (120, 141), Vegetable Oil, Glazing Agents (Carnauba Wax, Bees Wax).

LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK:

Reconstituted Fruit Juice & Glucose Syrup – The World Health Organisation recommendations are for children to consume *no more than 6 teaspoons* of added sugar a day (and this includes for fruit juice and syrups as well as sugar added to any product.) With yoghurt you do have approximately 1 tsp (4 grams) of sugar that's naturally occurring but the remainder will be added sugar.

Natural Flavour– Again opinions diverge on safety of natural flavours. But one thing is certain the flavours are not so natural as many consumers understand that term. MSG is a “natural flavor,” and so are other additives like castoreum (a vanilla flavour made from the anal sacs of beavers). Then again, “natural flavour” can be as simple as salt and pepper. Without calling the manufacturer of the food, there's no way to actually tell what “natural flavour” is, so unless you're willing to do some research, it's a safer bet to avoid it.

Vegetable Oil – Highly processed oil and often genetically modified source. Unlike olive oil, it isn't cold-pressed. To refine it, a solvent is used to extract the oil from rapeseed which is later evaporated off. That's followed by neutralisation, bleaching, winterisation and de-odourisation steps, as with other industrial seed oils.

120 – a colour (red) that has been linked to allergic reactions, asthma, hay fever, hyperactivity, skin irritation (eczema, dermatitis, itching, hives, rash etc.) and stomach upset.



(50g per serving)

6.2
TEASPOONS



(53g per serving)

7.7
TEASPOONS

THAT
Sugar
FILM

SO WHAT'S THE BEST FRUIT?

YOUR CHALLENGE TODAY IS:

Check your pantry to see if the packaged dried fruit you buy has sulphites. Resolve to buy sulphite free in the future. Also in the lunchbox where you would normally put dried fruit or a dried fruit bar/fruit leather consider next time putting in seaweed or biltong (which are also convenience keep in pantry foods).

YOUR BONUS CHALLENGE:

Get into the kitchen and have a go making your own dried fruit in a dehydrator or in your oven! Or better yet have a go making fruit gummies with added goodness of gelatine. See recipes below. Remember to share your pics with us on social media. Use the hashtags: [#packetfreefebruary](#) [#domskitchen](#) so we can find them.

There are a few companies are making products that avoid many or all of the most problematical ingredients. [Check out this link](#) for more recommendations. These are not blanket endorsements you need to check the backs of all packets as even from one company you can get very different products and companies vary their ingredients often.

RECIPES TO TRY:

Make it yourself ideas:

Fruit gummies recipes: [this one](#) and [this one](#) in oven or dehydrator.

Make your own fruit drinks with a different with [this one](#).

RECOMMENDED READING / WATCHING:

These are more in the category of to “geek out on” but worth a read when you get a moment:

- [this one](#)
- My blog post on [this one](#)
- Another view which I would tend to agree with [this one](#). Only what is outside the scope of the article are some of the points I raise about kids taste buds and loss of appetite if full up on fruit.

P.S. I am not a nutritionist or a dietitian so the views expressed are my own personal views from reading widely in field of nutrition. Please consult your (hopefully well informed!) health professional being making any dietary changes.

How was your day three? Got a question? Head over to the [Facebook](#)

and add it today's post or add your question at the comment section of this post. Feel free to email me with any questions you may have as well!

Don't forget! Share your recipe creations or lunch boxes in the [Facebook](#). Remember we have cool spot prizes.



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