

Public release date: 5-Oct-2006

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Fruit juice intake among preschool children not associated with weight

Study published in October Pediatrics

Consumption of 100 percent fruit juices is not linked with preschoolers being overweight, finds a new research study published this week in the October issue of *Pediatrics*, the leading scientific research journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). This latest analysis of the largest government database on food consumption (NHANES - National Health and Nutritional Examination Survey 1999-2002) finds no connection between 100 percent fruit juice consumption and weight status among preschool children ages 2 to 5.

In this new study (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/118/4/e1010>), researchers looked at data accumulated over several years and conclude there is no association between preschoolers' 100 percent fruit juice consumption and body mass index (BMI), even among those children who consume the most juice (greater than 12 ounces a day). The BMI used in this study is a number calculated from a child's weight and height and is based on special criteria established for children by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"These findings support conclusions from several previous research studies that also have found no connection between 100 percent fruit juice consumption and overweight status in preschoolers," says Sue Taylor, R.D., director of nutrition communications for the Juice Products Association.

This latest research concludes that while increased consumption of 100 percent fruit juice, and increased intake of other beverages, is associated with increased total caloric intake, it does not translate into increased BMI. The research paper states that this analysis "suggests that preschool children are consuming, on average, appropriate amounts of 100 percent juice." The data show that mean consumption of 100 percent fruit juice among preschool children was 4.7 ounces. This amount is well within guidelines established by the AAP of 4-6 ounces per day as being appropriate juice consumption levels for the ages of the children studied.

The importance of 100 percent fruit juices in the diet was recently confirmed in the U.S. government's 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report. This report states that with the exception of fiber, fruit juices provide several vitamins and minerals in higher amounts than do whole fruits. These nutrients include vitamin C, potassium and magnesium.

"100 percent juices, along with fruits and vegetables, also contain many phytonutrients not found in other foods or beverages," notes Taylor.

Consumed in moderation, 100 percent fruit juices provide an excellent complement to whole fruit intake and can play a vital role in increasing total fruit consumption in preschooler's diets.

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Note: A recap of other research can be found at:

http://fruitjuicefacts.org/serving_up_the_science.html
