Squeezing the Truth Out of Hidden Sugars in Children's Juices

Monday 10 November, 2014

Related Sectors:

Health ::

Scan Me:

Children's juices can contain more sugars than Coca Cola!

Parents should give their children water or whole fruit instead of juices.

These drinks are a major and unnecessary source of sugars and calories, causing tooth decay, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

According to a NEW survey by Action on Sugar on the hidden sugars found in seemingly healthy children's fruit juices[1], juice drinks[2], smoothies[3] (1) – over a quarter of products surveyed (i.e. 57 of the 203 products) contain the same amount or more sugars than Coca Cola – which contains a massive 5 teaspoons of sugar per 200ml glass! (2,3).

With one in five children aged 4-5 and one in three children aged 10-11 now overweight or clinically obese (4) AND tooth decay being the most common reason for children in England being admitted to hospital (5), Action on Sugar is urging (a) parents to give children water or whole fruit instead of juice and (b) manufacturers to reduce the level of sugars in their drinks, and to stop adding unnecessary sugars and calories, NOW.

Portion sizes vary greatly, however over half (117) of the drinks surveyed would receive a 'red' (high) label for levels of sugars per standard 200ml equivalent serving (6-7), including;

Smoothie: Tesco Goodness Slurper Apple & Banana Fruit Smoothie Snack for kids (8 teaspoons per 200ml equivalent) NB: this product is sold in a 90g portion size (8)
Juice Drink: Rubicon Lychee Exotic Juice Drink (7 teaspoons per 200ml equivalent) NB: this product is sold in a 288ml portion size (9)
Fruit Juice: Asda Chosen by Kids Tropical Juice From Concentrate (7 teaspoons per 200ml equivalent) NB: this product is sold in a 180ml portion size (10)
A QUARTER (25%) of children's juices can contain at least six teaspoons of sugars (25g) per 200ml (7) - the maximum ADULT daily intake of free sugars[4] as suggested in the SACN draft guidelines (11,12). Twenty-four of these products surveyed contain MORE than 25g sugars per 200ml equivalent; more than two and a half Krispy Kreme donuts (13)!

Fruit juices do not need to be so sweet - products with less sugars are available if you read the label: for example Innocent 100% Apple Juice for Kids contains 15.6g of sugars per 200ml, a third (32%) less than Morrison's Apple Juice From Concentrate which has 22.8g of sugars per 200ml.

Even though there is absolutely no need to add sugar to a product made with fruit, a quarter (59) of those surveyed also contained sugar or glucose-fructose syrup as an ADDED ingredient. Fruit when consumed 'whole' is both naturally sweet and good for you, as it contains fibre and vitamins. When processed into fruit juice drinks, the sugars (fructose) in the fruit cell walls are released as 'free sugars' which damage your teeth and provide unnecessary calories; you take in more calories without feeling full (i.e. A 200ml glass of orange juice can contain 3 oranges (14)).

Current UK guidelines state that a small (150ml) glass of unsweetened 100% fruit juice can count as one of your '5 a Day' (15). This recommendation is wrong and should be withdrawn. Only six products are actually sold in 150ml portion size packaging, which is of no help to parents trying to make a healthy choice for their children.

Chairman of Action on Sugar,Professor Graham MacGregor of the Wolfson Institute, Queen Mary University of London says, 'It is a complete scandal that these drinks are marketed to children and parents as if they are 'healthy': this has to stop. We need to stop Britain's childhood obesity epidemic spiralling out of control."

Dr Aseem Malhotra, Cardiologist, Action on Sugar said, "It is not just tooth decay but there is increasing scientific evidence that regular sugary drink consumption is associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease, independent of body weight, suggesting we are all vulnerable. Fruit juice and smoothies should not be part of a healthy balanced diet."

Katharine Jenner, Campaign Director of Action on Sugar says "Our advice is to eat the fruit, don't drink the juice. Juice should be an occasional treat, not an 'everyday' drink. These processed drinks are laden with sugar and calories and do not have the nutritional benefits of fresh fruit and vegetables."

Kawther Hashem, Nutritionist of Action on Sugar says: "It is highly concerning that many parents are still buying fruit juices and juice drinks for their children thinking they are choosing healthy products; children should be given as little juice as possible. What is more concerning are the products with added sugar and glucose-fructose syrup. We call on all manufacturers to stop adding more sugars to already sweet juices, particularly in children's products."

Tips for #lesssugar:

Parents are today being urged to make more informed food and drink switches such as; diluting fruit juice with water, opting for unsweetened juices, only giving them to children during meals, as well as limiting portions to a small glass, 150ml, a day or much better - drink water and eat whole fruit and vegetables.

-Ends-

For more information contact:

National PR - David Clarke @ Rock PR:

E: david@rock-pr.com

M: 07773 225516

Notes to Editors

Ref 1 - Survey details – full survey attached with this release

203 soft fruit juices, juice drinks and smoothies from UK retailers - Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's, Waitrose, The Co-operative, Ocado and Morrison's
Single portion products - portion size ranged from 85 – 500ml
Products specifically aimed for children. Search criteria was determined using the supermarkets' online shopping system and recording products under their children's drinks section e.g. 'lunchbox and kids'.
Supermarket own and branded products
Ref 2 - Coca Cola contains 10.6g of sugars per 100ml- http://www.coca-cola.co.uk/brands/coca-cola.html (9 teaspoons per 330ml can)

Ref 3 - 4g of sugar in every level teaspoon

Ref 4 - Overweight and obesity in children – page 23http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB05131/obes-phys-acti-diet-eng-2012-rep.pdf

Ref 5 - Common reason for children hospital admission is tooth decay
-

Ref 6 - Colour-coded Nutrition Labelling - the ratings for red, amber and green for each nutrient are based on the Department of Health Guide to Creating a Front of Pack (FoP) Nutrition Label for Pre-packed Products Sold Through Retail
Outlets:

Traffic light labels are given per 100ml and per 200ml. Portion size criteria applies to portion/serving sizes greater than 150ml. Traffic light labelling given per portion for drinks based on new front of pack Traffic Light Labelling criteria.

Sugar - Red >13.5g/portion or >11.25g/100ml Amber >2.5?11.25g/100ml, Green ?2.25g/100ml

Ref 7 - Serving size has been standardised to 200ml, the standard portion size given on 46% of packs. Although many varieties are available in a 200ml carton size, serving size ranged from 85-500ml and

have been recalculated as 200ml for comparison purposes.

Ref 8 - Smoothies usually contain crushed fruit, purees and fruit juice to produce a premium fruit juice product. A smoothie labelled as "fruit juice" may contain no other added ingredients and is subject to the same regulations as fruit juice. Non pure fruit smoothies may contain additional ingredients such as yoghurt or milk – all ingredients must be labelled. - http://www.britishsoftdrinks.com/Fruit-Juices

Ref 9 - Juice drinks - Juice drinks are '1% to 99% juice, nectars, still flavoured waters, sports drinks and iced teas'. As neither sports drinks or iced teas are marketed towards children, they were not included in the survey -http://www.britishsoftdrinks.com/Still-and-Juice-Drinks

Ref 10 - Fruit juice - Fruit juices are defined as, '100% pure juice made from the flesh of fresh fruit or from whole fruit, depending on the type used. It is not permitted to add sugars, sweeteners, preservatives, flavourings or colourings to fruit juice'. Fruit juices are usually described as: From concentrate, Not from concentrate, Freshly squeezed http://www.britishsoftdrinks.com/Fruit-Juices

Ref 11 – World Health Organisation definition free sugars – all monosaccharides and disaccharides added to foods by the manufacturer, cook, or consumer, plus sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, and fruit juices.

Ref 12 - draft SACN for free sugars intake for adult women
–
https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-draft-sacn-carbohydrates-and-health-report

Ref 13 -Krispy Kreme donut contains 10g of sugars per serving
-http://www.krispykreme.co.uk/2012/03/Doughnut-Ingredients-Nutritional.pdf

Ref 14 – Waitrose - it takes 13-15 oranges to produce 1 litre of
juice

Ref 15 - Current guidelines state - one 150ml glass of unsweetened 100% fruit or vegetable juice can count as a portion of '5 a Day'. But only one glass counts, so further glasses of juice don't count towards your total 5 A DAY portions.http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Pages/Whatcounts.aspx

[1] Fruit juice - '100% pure juice made from the flesh of fresh fruit or from whole fruit. It is not permitted to add sugars, sweeteners, preservatives, flavourings or colourings to fruit juice'.

[2] Juice drinks - Juice drinks are '1% to 99% juice, nectars, still flavoured waters, sports drinks and iced teas'.

[3] Smoothies - usually contain crushed fruit, purees and fruit. A smoothie labelled as "fruit juice" may contain no other added ingredients.

[4] Free sugars – includes sugars that are added to food, as well as sugars that are naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit concentrates, not sugars in milk products and whole fruit & vegetables.

Company Contact:

_

Pressat Wire

E. support[@]pressat.co.uk

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wire.pressat.co.uk