

Dietitians Agree: Premade Smoothies are Not Good for Weight Loss.



Smoothies are thought to be chockfull of nutrition, helping weight loss efforts by keeping you full and giving your body the vitamins and minerals it needs. However, as yummy and as practical as premade smoothies can be – and there are hundreds of tasty varieties from which to choose - added sweeteners and sugary concentrated fruit juices within the smoothies are anything but healthy. As a rule of thumb, homemade is better than store-bought. Premade smoothies are loaded with sugar, which can cause Inflammation and insulin resistance. High sugar ingestion has also been linked to heart disease and high blood pressure. And if you're drinking something green because you think it's healthy, you can be in for an unpleasant – and unhealthy - surprise.

Check those labels! Processed vegetables and fruits are simply not as healthy as fresh ingredients. You end up missing the fiber, vitamins and minerals found in fresh fruits and veggies. But, more importantly, sugar additives in premade smoothies can be as unhealthy as a can of sugary soda.

Even “fresh” store bought smoothies from places like Panera Bread or Orange Julius can be brimming with unwanted calories which, although producing an afternoon boost of energy, will cause you to crash from that lofty sugar high. According to *Prevention.com*, some smoothies have 100 grams of sugar, the amount similar to those contained in a pint of ice cream. Most places offering fresh smoothies have the nutrition facts visible for their customers.

Look for smoothies made with plain Greek yogurt and berries, as berries naturally have fewer sugar grams than fruit. Beware of sugary yogurts and concentrated fruit juices! Although these ingredients may make a tasty smoothie treat, if you are watching your sugar intake (which you should!), it’s wise to be mindful of what these smoothies are made of. Few things are worse than thinking you are doing yourself a solid by choosing a healthy salad and a smoothie for lunch – only to discover the salad dressing has tons of sugar and fat calories, and the smoothie you had may as well have been made from ice cream and cotton candy!

Don’t despair, smoothie lovers! Ryan Andrews, dietician and author of *A Guide to Plant Based Eating*, says you can put “nearly anything” into a smoothie, so you aren’t limited. Start out with a liquid (water, unsweetened non-dairy milk or kefir), vegetables, low-sugar fruits like blueberries and strawberries, then add some almonds or nut butter and toppings like coconut. This way, you get the fullness from healthy fats from nuts, protein from yogurt or nut milk, plus all the vitamins and minerals from your greens and fruits. Here’s to your health!

