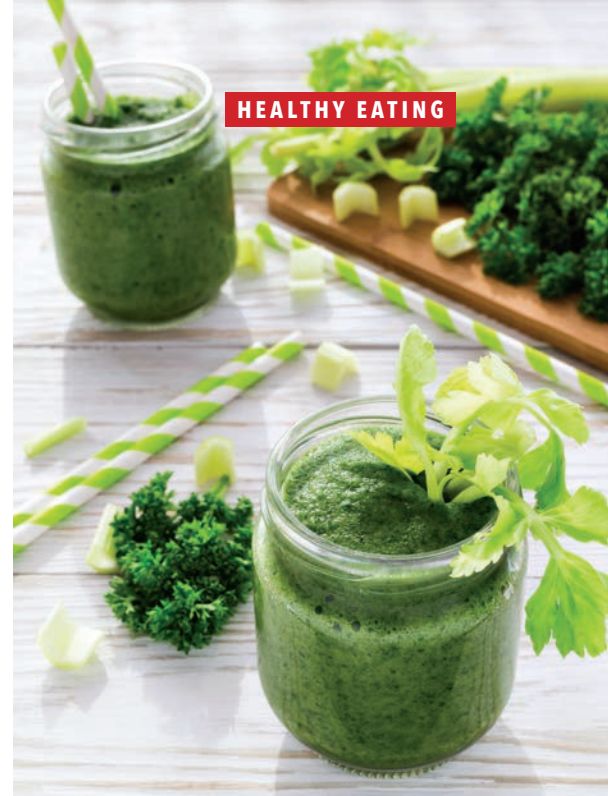


PUTTING THE squeeze ON

*Drinking your nutrients from fresh fruit and vegetable sources would sound like a tempting proposition to most time-pressed, reasonably health-conscious folk engaged in the daily 9-5 grind. But, suggests **Prevashni Naidu**, before you rush out to buy yourself the Bentley of juicers, get the facts about juicing first*



have you caught the Netflix documentary *Fat, Sick and Nearly Dead*, which chronicles the healthy-eating mission undertaken by Aussie entrepreneur Joe Cross? If you have, you've probably also seriously contemplated embarking on your own juicing transformation journey.

There is no doubt that the juice trend has taken a firm hold of the world's health-seekers, says Tamara Ogilby, owner of The Juice Kitchen in Hillcrest, north of Durban. "The market is still relatively small in South Africa, but it's fast gaining momentum. To put it into perspective, there are as many juice bars in New York as there are coffee shops. Even Starbucks now offers fresh cold-pressed juices."



Tamara and Mark Ogilby

Ogilby, who has designed her menu with the help of leading diet experts, started her juice bar after relocating from the UK three years ago. "My husband and I moved back with our three small children, and we soon realised that the juice revolution which was taking place in London, New York and Australia hadn't hit South African shores yet. We started juicing when our children were born as an easy and effective way of getting them to get their required daily intake of fruit and veg."

Danielle Roberts, nutritionist for the Sharks rugby team, has also observed an increased interest in juice-based diets among clients. "There are certainly many health benefits of drinking freshly juiced fruits and veggies," says Roberts, who concedes that Dietary Guidelines recommending eating upwards of four to six portions of fruit and vegetables a day is a tough ask for most, and suggests juicing to get your daily fix of nutrients if you don't have time to get the full complement in through eating alone.

"I think of it as a great motivator to set good eating patterns for the day. I usually make myself a healthy breakfast juice or smoothie,

and I know I've given my immune system a boost. I find that it staves off cravings for unhealthy snacks during the day, if used to supplement a healthy meal plan."

According to health authorities such as the Mayo Clinic, fruits and vegetables do retain most vitamins, minerals and plant chemicals (or phytonutrients) through the juicing process.

"They contain valuable compounds called flavonoids and anthocyanins, which guard against cellular damage, which is very common in modern lifestyles that expose us to chemicals and pollution," Roberts explains.

JUICING AND SUPERFOODS

Getting the highest nutritional value from your juice, however, requires substantial research and experimentation, suggests Prime Human Performance Institute dietician Keri Strachan, whose first course of action with all of her clients is to establish the very best eating patterns, before supplementation or juicing is even considered.

Enter the era of the "superfood". With so many fruits and vegetables facing the rap over the pesticide and herbicide toxins present in them, it's a relief to know that experts have started directing us towards foods that are naturally nutrient-dense and, basically, awesomely beneficial to our health and wellbeing.

Introduced as a term in 2004, a "superfood" was defined by Dr Steven Pratt (author of *Superfoods Rx: Fourteen Foods That Will Change Your Life*) as a food that is readily available; contains essential nutrients that enhance longevity; and has scientifically based health benefits. Not only are these foods extremely beneficial to our health and immunities, but they are so nutrient-dense that they increase our natural energy levels, while at the same time helping us to lose weight.

Incorporating superfoods in your juicing recipes, therefore, could give you that extra nutrient boost you're looking for. (For a list of superfoods that could easily be included in your daily juicing ritual, see *The Juicer's Superfood list* on page 28.) >

There are as many juice bars in New York as there are coffee shops.

A QUICK WAY TO WEIGHT LOSS?

Juice proponents are quick to point out, however, that long-term juice diets should not be seen as the magic bullet to weight loss.

Roberts, whose work with the Sharks has given her an intimate understanding of the athletic body type and its nutritional requirements, explains the cons of sustained juice fasting to lose weight. “Apart from the loss of fibre that interferes with gut health, the high levels of fruit sugars and the lack of protein are major triggers to ill health some time down the line. If you’re aiming for good health, and muscle mass, which becomes even more significant to overall physical wellbeing as we age, juicing alone can severely compromise your health.”

Strachan adds: “Most juice fasts contain far too few kilojoules, which causes your metabolism to slow down in order to conserve energy, so once you return to your usual diet, you’ll most certainly end up regaining the weight, and maybe even more. Avoiding solid foods that contain essential nutrients such as fibre can be extremely detrimental to your health. Fibre is extremely important for your digestive health, which is your gut. Good gut flora determines your entire immune system and how well-equipped you will be to fight off disease and infection.”



EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Juicing should never substitute medical treatment or medical diagnosis. Always consult with your physician and a dietician before stopping a course of medication.
- If you do decide to go on a “juice fast” or “juice cleanse”, make sure your recommended dietary allowance needs are met. Never go below 1 200 calories or 5 500 kilojoules (this is the minimum amount of energy required to maintain healthy bodily functioning).
- Pesticides and bacteria thrive on unwashed fruits and vegetables. Thoroughly wash your ingredients before juicing, along with the utensils and cutting boards you use to prepare your ingredients for the juicer.
- While drinking fresh is always recommended, you can store your juice in an air-tight, preferably glass container to drink later on. Exposure of the juice to air and bacteria may do you more harm than good.

THE PERFECT HOME JUICER?

Juicers are a big investment. Do your research before purchasing.

Masticating, or cold-pressed, juicers crush and mash ingredients, using every last bit of produce being pulped. Consumer Reports (<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/juicers/buying-guide.htm>) says these juicers can jam when grinding tougher fruit and veg varieties, so look for options with a reverse button. Although slightly more expensive, masticating juicers tend to leave more healthful and fibre-rich pulp in the juice.

Centrifugal juicers are the second most-common types of juicers available. Known commonly as “juice extractors”, they use a rapidly whirling disc that cuts the produce, then spins it to separate the juice from the pulp. 🍎



Apart from the loss of fibre that interferes with gut health, the high levels of fruit sugars and the lack of protein with sustained juice fasting are major triggers to ill health some time down the line.

The juicer's superfood list

Add these nutrient-dense options to your daily juicing ritual

01

Beets are rich in antioxidants, which help to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke.



02

Blueberry's fibre, potassium, folate, vitamin C, vitamin B6 and phytonutrient content, coupled with its lack of cholesterol, all support heart health.



03

Avocados contain more potassium than bananas, are loaded with heart-healthy fats and fibre, and can even lower cholesterol levels.



04

Turmeric contains curcumin, a substance with powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.



05

Spinach benefits eye health, reduces oxidative stress, and helps to prevent cancer and reduce blood pressure levels.

