

TOP 4 SMOOTHIE MISTAKES TO AVOID

Smoothies are great liquid replacements of a meal, full of nutrients, vitamins and minerals. They are also a simple way to incorporate fruits and vegetables into our diet. Moreover, they are super easy and quick to make, so we can always have a healthy meal, no matter where we are.

But there is a problem – not all smoothies are healthy. If we do not prepare it the right way and consequentially insert sugars, harmful trans fats or other things our body does not need, a smoothie can actually be detrimental to our health.

Which are four most common mistakes we can encounter when preparing a smoothie? Making these mistakes will result in your smoothie being a big fat bomb filled with calories and you will eventually gain weight instead of lose it.

1. Way too much sugar:

When you find a new smoothie recipe, you should first check if there is any added sugar or sweet ingredients in it. Sugar sometimes hides in places we would mistakenly consider to be healthy – muesli, yoghurts, juices... If you are not paying attention to your ingredients, your smoothie can end up containing as much sugar as two Coca-Cola cans!

So keep in mind to always avoid smoothies with any kind of added sugars. If the recipe you are using asks for adding juice, always add freshly pressed one and avoid the one you can find in a supermarket! Store-bought fruit juices are always packed with plenty of sugar so adding them to your smoothie is no benefit at all.

Remember: Fruit juices found in supermarkets are just sugary water with added flavor, which is certainly not doing any good to your body.

The following list contains a few smoothie ingredients you should never add to your smoothie:

- ice cream or sherbet
- sugar or agave nectar
- any kind of chocolate syrup or powder, such as Nestlé
- store-bought honey
- non-organic peanut butter with added sugar
- low quality protein powders
- whip cream
- chocolate or any other pudding mix

Fruits already contain enough sugars so there is absolutely no need for adding additional sugar to your smoothie.

Do not forget to add some vegetables to your smoothie to compensate for all the sugar in your fruits. However, if you are preparing a green smoothie and want to improve the taste, you should opt for berries or non-dairy milk rather than adding sugar. Contrary to what we can read in many articles, avoid adding dates, honey or maple syrup to your smoothies.

You should also include spinach, kale or chia seeds in order to add fiber, which will slow down the sugar digestion. This will keep your insulin levels from spiking and help your body digest your smoothie.

2. The More the Merrier

It is believed that green and fruit smoothies are very healthy, so it can be tempting to add as many pieces of fruit or veg as possible. But do not forget that by doing that, you are also adding extra calories, complicating the taste and making your smoothie look unattractive. Adding so many ingredients means that your smoothie will turn out looking like a brownish goo.

So do not get your hopes up that adding kale, spinach, avocados, broccoli, coconut milk and a ton of superfoods will get you skinny in a day. You should also keep in mind that not all ingredients go together and some might just make you feel bloated – there should be equilibrium for everything. It is advisable to start with 3 or 4 main ingredients and basic recipes and then build from that.

3. You get hungry fast

It is also possible that you make a smoothie that will not keep you full for a very long time. As smoothies are considered to be meal replacements, this should not happen. If you drink your smoothie and feel like snacking half an hour later, there is no point in substituting your normal meal with a smoothie and you should therefore reconsider your smoothie preparation.

You probably want to eat meals that are satiating and fill you up until your next meal, so you should keep in mind that simply adding vegetables and fruits does not mean that your smoothie contains the protein your body needs to function throughout the day. If your smoothie consists of only sugar with no protein or fat, you can be sure you will get hungry in an hour. Additionally, if your smoothie does not contain enough calories that would make up for an actual meal, this can hardly be called a meal replacement.

You should therefore add ingredients that contain some much-needed nutrients (protein and fat!). Make sure you aim for at least 10 g of protein per serving or you will risk being hungry in less than an hour.

Choose from the following ingredients to make your smoothie more nutritional:

- non-dairy soy or almond milk
- Greek yoghurt
- tofu
- cottage cheese
- beans
- nuts and nut butters
- quality protein powders

However, you should make sure to keep in mind the mistake number 2 – do not overdo it and add too many things! You can easily double the calories by adding ingredients your body does not need.

4. Using low-quality ingredients

If you put low quality ingredients into your smoothie, you should not expect it to miraculously turn out to be healthy. In order to get that healthy mixture you are hoping for, you should avoid using low-grade protein powders or superfoods or non-quality fruits. You should rather opt for fresh produce, full of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.

You should also look out for colorings, preservatives or other inactive ingredients that will add hidden fillers, chemicals or inflammatory agents into your smoothie.

Additionally, keep in mind that there is no point in adding store-bought mixtures of oats filled with sugars or superfoods blends containing only micro-doses of the actual superfoods. Always read the tags on the products you buy and check the percentage of the ingredients in the foods you are buying.