

# vegetable juices for health

I was introduced to the benefits of fresh vegetable juices by a neighbour in our village when I was being treated for mouth and throat cancer. This was 20 years ago - and here I still am. This lovely lady lent me her juicer to see if it would suit me. Since then fresh vegetable and fruit juices have become much more widely known for their health benefits.

At the time, I was on a liquids-only diet - so being able to drink different blends of raw fruit and vegetable juices, and thereby ingest a range of vitamins and minerals, was a revelation and a huge help in my recovery. That said, raw fruit and vegetable juices have health benefits for the fittest amongst us as an addition to a balanced diet.

It takes just a small amount of planning and time to produce something delicious, easy to drink and digestible.

The crucial element for me was buying a very efficient machine. This one is the Champion brand, which is available mail-order in France. Be warned - they are expensive - about 350€ for this model. I promise you I am not on commission! Other brands are available, but the cheaper models are often less efficient at extracting the maximum of juice and nutrients - and laborious to clean.

The range of possible blends is huge. With my machine I also bought the original guide by Dr Norman Walker, which contains many recipes/formulae for targeting different problems. Later on, I found *Juicing for Health*, by Caroline Wheeler a very useful book.

For me, the basic mix of carrots and apples is always a favourite. This I sometimes vary by adding celery, beetroot, spinach, parsley or cucumber. Proportions are important, so as not to overdose, as some of these mixes are potent.

Some blends are best diluted with water. Drinking the juice as soon as possible after making it is ideal. I do though keep some in a covered jug in the fridge for the second day.

You might ask 'Why not just eat the vegetables'. The answer, juices can be quickly digested, and are a practical way of increasing your uptake of raw foods that have not lost nutritional benefits that cooking can destroy.