



# Real Activ Juices from Dabur Foods

The Réal Activ range has three categories of juices – 100% (single fruit) juice, Fruit-Veggie, a combination of fruit and vegetable juices and Fibre+, with added fibre. This is different from Dabur's Réal range which has added sugar and other flavours as well.

### Demystifying the Ingredients in the Variants

*100% Juices - Orange, Apple, Grape:* Water, juice concentrate and vitamin C (in the orange variant)

*Fruit-veggie combination - Mixed fruit-Cucumber-Spinach; Orange-Carrot; Mixed Fruit-Beetroot-Carrot:* The ingredient list is long, as a blend of fruit concentrates (apple/orange/guava/mango/apricot/pineapple/banana) and mixed vegetable concentrates is used in creating these. For example, the cucumber-spinach variant contains a bit of carrot, celery, onion, pepper, beetroot, sauerkraut along with cucumber and spinach juice concentrates.

*Fibre + - Multi fruit punch, Green apple punch, Banana-strawberry:*

The main ingredients are water, fruit juice concentrates, resistant maltodextrin (soluble corn fibre), acidity regulator 296 (malic acid which is also found commonly in apples), antioxidant 300 (Vitamin C which helps to retain freshness) and stabilizer 440 (pectin, a gelling agent usually isolated from fruits, which helps to keep the fibre source in the solution). Though the numbers and names may be confusing to the layperson, these are compounds which are commonly added to foods.

### What we found:

Product Features (manufacturer's claim in italics)

- *No added sugar* - The sweetness in the juices is from the sugars naturally present in the fruits. Some variants like Multi-fruit are sweeter than the Orange variant as they contain apple or white grape juice concentrate which are naturally high in sugar. It is important to remember that the body does not treat sugar from fruit or the regular cane sugar differently - all sugars are finally converted to glucose by the body. So the claim is not a "go ahead" signal to drink this juice liberally. However, one reason to choose these juices over sugary, aerated or popular 'mango' drinks, is that you get the nutrients in fruits and not just artificial colours and flavours!

- *No preservatives:* This is something that baffles many of us - how can the manufacturer make such a claim for a product that has been standing on the shelf, while juices made at home do not last beyond a day? This is possible because the frozen juice concentrate is blended with water, heated, cooled and packed in sterile conditions with complete seals in a package like Tetra Pak®, conditions that cannot be replicated at home. The package acts as an excellent barrier to the outside environment. Of course, once opened, the product needs to be stored in the refrigerator and consumed in a few days.
- *No added colours and flavours* - Most ready-to-drink beverages have added colour and flavour - this helps make the product more appealing, especially to children. Real Activ juices are not as attractive in colour as other drinks. The flavours are pleasant and not hard hitting compared to typical flavoured fruit drinks and the various combinations of juices have been used to good effect. We had a small group of children 8-14 years, both boys and girls, taste the variants. The hot favourites were Orange-Carrot and Multi-Fruit (Fibre+)! The kids liked the

colours of Cucumber-Spinach and Green Apple Punch but found the taste alien or bitter. The plain Orange variant was not liked as the kids found it too sour.

- *Rich in antioxidants:* In Real Activ juices this refers to vitamin C, and beta carotene (found in variants having orange and carrots) and these nutrients are definitely known to help in the normal functioning of the immune system. Readers should also be aware that antioxidant is the term loosely used for various substances/actives found in fruits and vegetables. Oftentimes strong, 'not proven' claims are made using this term.
- *Helps to meet one serve of your 5:* Children are required to eat 4-5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day (Read the article on balanced diet in the Nutrition and Wellness section). It is definitely preferable to choose whole fruit over juices, since you lose the skin, some of the pulp, nutrients and fibre when you make the juice from the fruit. Manufacturers' claims sometimes can be misleading in this context. A specific claim on the apple variant says, one glass of this pack = juice of three apples. The claim, though crafted to talk about juice, is misleading, as the consumer may assume she is getting



all the goodness of three apples! Having said this, the Real Activ range could be used to meet the five servings requirement of fussy eaters, on a hectic day, or to make a disliked fruit more acceptable.

- *Snack healthy* – This depends on what the fruit juice is replacing! If it replaces aerated or sugary fruit drinks, this option is definitely healthier. But not if it replaces whole fruit, since one medium size apple provides 74 calories

while a serving of apple juice is 125 calories, minus the benefits of fibre and nutrients lost in the skin. Also, the juice should be consumed as a part of healthy diet and lifestyle – drinking juice alone cannot be the magic bullet to good health!

- *Fibre plus variants make additional claims on 'weight management, fullness, keep digestive system healthy, maintain heart health.'* The claimed benefits are based on the fibre source added in

the juice. Another claim on the pack reads: Fibre in one glass of this pack = Fibre in one apple or orange. All these claims are valid only in the context of an overall healthy diet and life style. Eating adequate fruits and vegetables will meet daily requirements of fibre. So view this range more for the variety in flavours it offers (strawberry-banana or green apple punch).

### Nutrition:

All Real Activ juices deliver around 100-125 calories per serve and the fruits and vegetables present in the juices are naturally low in protein and fat. Compared to other sweet treats in the beverage category, these juices are a good choice.

### Cost and Availability:

The Activ range is easily available at your local store and in super market chains, though some variants like banana strawberry, green apple punch are not available all the time. At Rs. 99 per pack, daily consumption may not be feasible for most families. The pack should last 4-5 days at the rate of a glass every day. The Activ range is largely available in the one litre format, hence is restricted to home use; it cannot be part of the school snack box.

### Recommendation:

Yes – we recommend this range of juices as one of the sources for fruits and vegetables and for cultivating healthier beverage habits from childhood. Also, this range offers interesting flavours and the convenience of vegetable juices!

