



# The Observer St. Kitts - Nevis

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## DR. CHARLES' HEALTH CHAT

### CARROTS, CARIBBEAN SUN & AGING



The orange root of the plant *Daucus carota*, from Greek *karoton*, meaning head, has virtues much more than its common name suggests. Carrot as a food was cultivated around the sixteenth century, already listed for its medicinal essences in the wild state from the Greeks and Romans. The Carrot Family includes members of the *Umbelliferae*, recognized by their flower cluster (umbel) and distributed over two thousand five hundred species, including but not limited to Fennel, Parsnips, Angelica, Chervil, Coriander, Caraway, Celery, Dill, and Parsley.

Carrots are considered highly nutritive, having a large amount of carotenes, also called pro-vitamin A. Beta-carotene, which is transformed in the body into vitamin A, is so rich in carrots that one pound of this vegetable yields about five times the minimum daily requirement of this vitamin. Vitamin A is well known for its properties of protecting the body's mucous membranes from infection as well as the healing of wounds.

As we grow older, our body becomes stiffer, less elastic, and less agile. This is due to a aging process called *cross-linking*, large structural proteins such as collagen are welded together in "cross-links." This progressive formation of chemical bonds is similar in process to tanned leather, old hard bread, and wrinkled skin. The interconnected bonds results in loss of flexibility and an increased tendency to tear and repair poorly. The result of cross-linking is hardened arteries, high blood pressure, less flexibility in our joints, and wrinkled skin. Sound all too familiar ?

Many safe nutrients slow the cross-linking or aging process, including the B-vitamins, vitamin C, and most notably *beta-carotenes*. Skin in our Caribbean sun easily suffers from cross-linking damage, which is prevented by the B-vitamin PABA, found in many suntan lotions. Beta-carotene, the yellowish-orange coloring in carrot juice, is also an effective protector of skin damage from ultraviolet light. In fact, beta-carotene is now approved as a prescription drug for those who have extreme photosensitivity.

Beta-carotene, however, is not the only virtue of carrots. Discovered some time ago was *abscisic acid*, a naturally occurring plant hormone found to have potent anti-tumor properties. This chemical is also found in cabbage, potato, lemon, and avocado. So effective was its cancer preventing properties that a leading drug firm sought to synthesize this compound, finding it all too expensive for commercial production.

In today's world of fast foods, bottled fruit juices are readily available, yet few realize the virtues of fresh vegetable juices. Fruit and vegetable juices are absorbed into the blood in less than 20 minutes, whereas these foods cooked and eaten along with other articles, like meats, may take hours for digestion. We could say in a nutshell that fresh fruit juices are *cleansers* of the body, whereas fresh vegetable juices are *regenerators* and *builders* of the body. The juices of raw fruits and vegetables, freshly extracted, are the richest sources of vitamins and minerals, in a form that no pill can duplicate.

Juice extractors are now readily available in most any department store and can be used to make delicious and nutritious beverages. And when it comes to vegetable juices, no other plant has more tasty virtues than *carrot*.

Carrots are often the base, essential ingredient in making a delicious vegetable cocktail. Its sweet flavor blends well when preparing other vegetables which are a little harsh when drank alone, like cabbage, radish, and bell pepper. Consider these delicious and nutritious blends:

### **CARROT, CELERY, & APPLE JUICE**

Two parts Carrot, one part celery, and one part apple. This tasty blend is excellent for allaying constipation, toning the bowels, and adding vigor. Drink on an empty stomach and eat nothing afterwards for 30 minutes.

### **CARROT, BEET, & CUCUMBER**

Three parts carrot, one part beet juice, one part cucumber. This cocktail is excellent for catarrh from a nasty cold, sinus condition, or lingering sore throat. Drink a small glass daily until normalcy returns.

### **CARROT, SPINACH, AND CELERY**

Four parts carrot, one part spinach, and two parts celery. An excellent body cleanser and regenerator. Drinking this cocktail once or twice a week will prevent the return of hemorrhoids and headaches. Both of these conditions should be self-limiting, and warn of

your body's need for a *house cleaning*.

Raw carrot juice is a rich source of vitamin A. It is a powerful blood builder and natural solvent for tissue acids that build up from overindulgence of refined foods and meats. It helps promote proper appetite and aids digestion. A four ounce glass, daily, can achieve wonders.

Links

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