**Nutritional value of carrot juice** [1]

Alice,

What is the value of drinking carrot juice?

? Carrot top

**Answer**

Dear Carrot top,

The concentrated nutritional value of vegetable and fruit juices has made them a popular addition to many people's diets. One pint of fresh vegetable juice provides approximately the same vitamins, minerals, and enzymes as two large salads. And while synthetic vitamins and/or minerals may be chemically identical to those found in fruits and vegetables, the body does not absorb them as well as those in natural foods.

In the United States, carrots are the leading source of beta carotene. Beta carotene is the most active form of carotenoids, which are pigment substances in plants that can often form vitamin A. The major contributions vitamin A makes to the human body are to promote growth, for visual light and color, to prevent drying of the skin and eyes, for maintenance of the digestive and urinary tracts, and to enhance resistance to bacterial infection. Vitamin A has also been linked to cancer prevention. A deficiency in vitamin A can cause symptoms such as night blindness; poor growth; dry skin; and xerophthalmia or "dry eye," which can promote blindness due to a lack of mucus production by the eye. Carrots also contain the vitamins B, C, D, E, and K; the minerals calcium, phosphorous, potassium, sodium, and traces of other minerals; and a trace amount of protein. Calcium helps to strengthen bones, teeth, and the intestinal walls. The high mineral levels in carrots contribute to healthy skin, hair, and nails. Carrots also work as a sort of cleanser for the liver, and when consumed regularly, can help the liver excrete fats and bile.

For more resources on dietary supplements, including which vitamins and minerals are essential to your wellbeing, check out the following resource from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) [2]. The USDA's Nutritional Data Laboratory also provides a nutrient database, a useful tool to help you determine the nutritional value of certain foods. To help establish your unique nutritional recommendations based on your lifestyle, take a look at the Choose My Plate [3].

Juicing carrots will provide one with the same nutrients as eating them whole, but some feel
that the roughage contained in whole carrots is one of the main aspects of their value. Your body needs bulk (fiber-rich) foods for proper digestion. Should you decide to incorporate a fresh juice program into your diet, be sure to also include at least two fiber-rich foods each day, such as raw vegetables, fresh fruits, and whole grains.

One pound of carrots will make approximately six to eight ounces of carrot juice. Basically, if you already eat nutritionally balanced meals, juicing is a matter of time and preference. A balanced diet with a variety of foods and beverages will serve you well for a lifetime of health and fitness!

Alice!

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