

# You see what you eat

GOOD LIVING

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About 50 per cent of the western world use visual lenses. Although highly complex and delicate, eyes have very few nutritional demands.

Foods that improve eyesight should have anti-oxidant vitamins A C and E. Most people who maintain a mainly vegetable diet report good results.

They experience increase in energy and vitality, their skin and hair take on a new shine and grow stronger. Digestion is easier and intestinal functions more regular; night rest improves and is more restorative. They suffer fewer infections like flu and colds and breathing becomes easier and their eyesight improves. Such a diet may also guard against cataracts.

A menu rich in vitamin A is useful in preventing loss of visual acuity. The retina needs protection. Breakfast would include an apricot shake with bananas, apricots, honey and coconut milk as ingredients. This shake is very nutritious and excellent for children and sportsmen and any person involved in physical work. It is also useful in maintaining a healthy skin and increases the body's defence against infections.

Lunch would be cabbage juice, spinach salad on rice with carrots and stuffed peppers, eaten with whole bread. Supper would include pumpkin



cream and mango custard.

Those who have cataract and glaucoma would benefit from melon and orange juice for breakfast, with soymilk and a lunch of vegetable juice and Riviera salad with rice.

Muscular degeneration of the retina is the most common cause of blindness in aging persons.

A diet that keeps vision in optimal condition includes a breakfast of spinach shake and carrot cake with oranges and wheat germ; lunch of filled cucumbers and spinach lasagna with whole bread and a supper of potatoes and spinach with a mango.

The nutritional value of potatoes and spinach cannot be overemphasised. Spinach contains two vegetable pigments from the carotenoid group – Lutein and Zeaxanthin – which give it its peculiar colour. These pigments act as powerful anti-oxidants to protect the pigmented cells of the retina. Besides, potato and spinach meal is very balanced with the calorific proportion supplied in the three energy nutrients – carbohydrates, fat and protein. This makes it especially suitable for preventing anaemia, given the iron and folic acid in spinach. It helps in pregnancy and lactation because of its nutritional value and the fact that it is high in vitamins and minerals needed during these stages. It also aids in growth and malnutrition and when there is an increase in nutritional needs.

In people with a hereditary metabolic predisposition, oxalic acid may cause kidney stones. Spinach contains a certain amount of oxalic acid and is not recommended for those who are at risk of developing urinary stones from oxalate.

The crème of pumpkin is not only useful as an aid in loss of visual acuity and cataracts, but is important as prevention of cancer due to its vegetable fibre. Low sodium in pumpkin's protein makes it useful in kidney ailments. It has positive effects in prevention of high blood pressure and heart disease since it contains low saturated fats and no cholesterol. A high level of potassium in this dish helps protect arteries and the heart. Since it exerts a neutralising influence when there is an excess of stomach acidity and has mild laxative effects, it is important in digestive disorders and protects the intestinal lining.

Car drivers who suffer from poor vision at night need to adopt a special diet so as to adapt favourably to changes in lights. As you eat, put your eyes in mind.

