

# Carrots, avocado and blood

In the days of our grandparents carrots were later-day foods that were introduced in mashed delicacies. The school demonstration garden always had carrots and boys loved to pinch them to the chagrin of the agriculture teacher.

The tuber is a vital source of minerals and vitamin A. Vitamin A, commonly referred to as beta-carotene, is the yellow or orange pigment in vegetables or plants. The body converts it to vitamin A as needed and there is no risk of overdose with this ingredient compared to therapeutic and animal-sourced vitamin A.

Excess therapeutic vitamin A from animal sources can cause hyper-vitaminosis A. Which is why it should be consumed under the doctor's instruction if has to be taken over a long period or in high doses.

Carrots are useful for healthy skin, rarely cause allergies, improve mucosal linings, protect against ageing and improve eyesight. With low fats and calorific value, carrots protect the body against obesity and are useful for diabetics.

Carrots are important in recipes for the improved heart functioning, keep arteries healthy and they have a positive influence on the blood condition. Like the rest of the body, the composition of blood is quite useful in the maintenance of optimal health. For optimal functions, it is usually in perpetual flux.

After prolonged deep inhalation and exercise, oxygen in body tissues and blood increases. After a hearty meal, the blood nutrient levels change. In sickness, such as during active bacterial infections, there is an increase in white cells' death as they combat invading microorganisms, creating increased metabolic debris.

The maintenance of the body in as near optimal state as possible is important in the control of body functions and this can be achieved by proper and appropriate dietary



## GOOD LIVING

BY SOLOMON KARANJA

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intake. It is known in many cultures that some foods make the blood 'good' while other food ingredients make it 'bad'. Some even believe, mistakenly though, that to make blood one has to consume animal products or even drink blood itself.

Science has shown that nearly all the elements needed in making blood are available in most plant-based foods.

Inherent in the foundation of modern health science and medicine is the concept that you can clean or detoxify blood. Some metabolic remnants and ingested products are not completely eliminated from the body and they can accumulate and poison the blood.

These ingredients make the extracellular gaps dirty just as pollution affects rivers, lakes and seas.

The necessity and urgency to initiate anti-pollution and preventive plans to cleanse the body have given rise to a new use of words like 'detoxification' or 'blood purification'. For instance, plant foods rich in iron are useful in blood formation and help in alkalising the body, hence cleansing the system.

Culinary preparations that facilitate urine production and loss of waste products from the body help in alleviating and preventing development of allergies, eczema, obesity, renal complications and other chronic diseases.

Spinach, which is rich in iron, can be used in preparing a shake of raw spinach, yogurt, honey and water flavoured with lemon. Because of its alkalising action, this juice is useful in decongesting the liver and gallbladder by eliminating the bile.

At 1.02mg of iron in each 100gms and rich in folic acid, the avocado, too, is good for the blood. Diets rich in meat, cheese and shellfish, among others, are not just acidifying but can increase uric acid levels in the body as one of their waste products, which, in high concentrations, can cause renal stones and gout.

A stew of onions, tomatoes and cucumbers can be flavored with garlic and sea salt to produce a dish adequately combining several alkalising vegetables that can neutralize this acidification. This combination has antioxidants and, being low in calories, protects against obesity, arteriosclerosis and some cancers.

Total body protection can only be assured if we combine the food we consume constantly in such a manner that we avoid those that harm.