



## Carrots – antioxidant rich food to protect the heart, lungs and eyes

The healing plant compounds in carrots including carotenoids (beta-carotene, pro-vitamin A) protect the heart. A serving of carrots each day can **reduce risk of heart disease by up to 60%**. Carrots are also rich in vitamin C, fiber, potassium, vitamin B6, niacin, magnesium and folate – all help with **keeping the heart and lungs healthy**. Vitamin A and carotenoids in carrots **protect the macula and retina of the eye**.

### Healing Carrot Soup

#### Ingredients:

- One pound of carrots
- One medium yellow onion
- Four stalks of celery
- One tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Sea salt or mineral salt (or to taste if using salted broth)
- 3 – 4 cups of vegetable broth or chicken stock

Instructions: Wash vegetables and remove carrot tops, saving them for carrot top pesto or freezing for vegetable broth or other use. Dice the onion. Add diced onion and olive oil to large pot. Cook over low heat for 15-20 minutes, adding a pinch of salt to draw out more liquid in the onion, until the onion is golden and a bit sticky. While onion is cooking, chop carrots and celery into  $\frac{1}{4}$ " slices. Choose organic carrots and keep the skins on – much of the nutrient value of the carrots is just below the skins. When onions are golden brown, add carrots, celery and salt to the pot. Cook for an additional 10 minutes over low-medium heat. This will bring out the natural sweetness in the carrots and celery. Then add 3 cups of vegetable broth or chicken stock. Turn up the heat to medium-high and bring the soup up to a simmer. Cook for 10 – 15 minutes. Turn off the heat, and cool for 10 minutes. In a blender, add the soup, being careful to fill the blender to less than half full (hot liquids expand). Blend in batches until all of the soup is blended. Adding extra liquid as desired, to get the consistency you like. Taste and season with additional salt, if desired. This is a very basic soup recipe that creates good flavor because of the way that the vegetables work together and the technique of bringing out the flavor in the vegetables. You can season it in many different ways and create different variations. For example:

- Add grated fresh ginger, 1 – 3 teaspoons, to make a spicy carrot-ginger soup
- Add  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons ground cumin for a Middle-Eastern flavor.
- Add  $\frac{1}{12}$  teaspoons curry powder for an Eastern-Indian flavor. Top with sour cream and chives.
- Replace some of the broth with a cup of unsweetened coconut milk, add a tablespoon of Thai-style chili sauce and top with fresh cilantro leaves for a Thai flavor.
- Add a dried red chile (or chile of your choice) to the soup during the cooking time and cook until soft. Add a clove of minced garlic and a teaspoon of cumin for a Southwestern flavor.

Other variations: You can also skip the blending and add other cut up cooked vegetables such as cauliflower, squash, sweet potato, corn, and potatoes. You can add cooked beans or lentils. You can add pieces of cooked meat such as chicken, grass-fed beef, buffalo, or lamb. This is the soup that I make for my family and friends whenever someone is sick. Carrots are known for their plant healing compounds that **prevent secondary infection** from setting in. This soup can be useful for someone with a cold or viral infection, to **help the immune system fight off a bacterial infection** that comes along when the immune system is already weakened.