

APRIL IS CARROT MONTH

Carrots boast plenty of health benefits for kids due to their high vitamin, fiber and antioxidant content. They are not only brimming with essential nutrients, but their sweet taste and crunchy texture also make them a favourite for kids of all ages. Carrot is a diverse vegetable that adds colour, flavour and texture to food.

- Naturally sweet and high in fibre, carrots are a great source of vitamin A and beta-carotene. Vitamin A is vital for vision and it forms part of a protein that absorbs light in the eye. It also supports cell growth and is essential in heart, lung and kidney function.
- Chewing a raw carrot acts as a natural toothbrush. They clear the plaque from our gums and teeth removing any bad odour created by the foods we eat. Carrots are also high in plaque-fighting keratin and Vitamin A which help strengthen delicate tooth enamel.
- Carrots get their orange colour because of its beta-carotene content. But did you know that carrots also come in purple, white, black, red and yellow?
- Carrots are made up of 88% water! They have 7% natural sugars, and the rest is protein, fibre, ash and fat.



Bugs Bunny loves carrots in the cartoons but real bunnies actually prefer grass and hay. They can have a small amount of carrot as an occasional treat.

Dip 'em

Dip peeled and sliced carrots into your favourite dip, like hummus, sour cream or ranch dressing.

Glaze 'em

Peel and chop carrots and cover in a glaze of olive oil and maple syrup and bake until done.

Grate 'em

Sneak grated carrots into your turkey or beef mixture for meatballs, burgers or meatloaf.

Blend 'em

Make an ABC smoothie (apple, banana, carrot) with raw peeled carrots.

CARROT CHIPS

Ingredients

- 4 medium carrots
- 1-3 teaspoons olive oil
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt

Directions

- Preheat oven to 400°F.
- Peel carrots, then slice into strips using the vegetable peeler. Avoid rotating the carrot for as long as possible to make wider sections; the thicker the pieces, the better they will turn out!
- Add the carrot strips to a bowl, and toss with olive oil. Start with a smaller amount- you don't need much! If they seem dry at the full 3 teaspoons, add another teaspoon.
- Place carrot peelings in a single layer on the cookie sheet, and sprinkle with salt.
- Bake for 10-20 minutes until crispy, tossing once or twice during cooking. (Exact cook time will depend on the thickness of the slices).

Serve and enjoy!

CARROT MUFFINS

Ingredients

- 400 grams (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups) of cooked carrot purée/mashed
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 100 g ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) melted butter
- 160 g (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) flour
- 2 tsp baking powder

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350F
- Peel and cook your carrots until tender by boiling them in a pot of water. Drain the carrots well. You can let them sit in a colander for a while so that all of the excess water drains away.
- Mash or purée the carrots. (Mashing makes a chunkier muffin, puréeing will make a smoother muffin.)
- Place carrot purée in a large bowl.
- Add eggs and butter. Beat these wet ingredients together until the batter becomes smooth.
- Add the flour, baking powder and cinnamon and beat for another 30-60 seconds to make a well mixed batter.
- Pour into muffin tin.
- Baked at 350F for 15 mins for mini muffins, 20 - 25 mins for standard size muffins.
- Cool.