

the healthy swimmer



Lewis Wright

Ravishing Radish

Raphanus sativus, known to many as the radish, is the root of a plant related to mustard. The plant is thought to originate from the wild radish, native to Europe, and was cultivated in ancient Egypt and China. Typically enjoyed raw as a topping on salads, the radish stands out with its bright red skin, white flesh and mild to peppery flavor.

This unsung vegetable often is carved into a rose garnish, but it's one garnish worth eating. The radish is a good source of vitamin C, iron, potassium, magnesium and folate, and appears to alleviate symptoms of colds, the flu, fevers, coughs, respiratory problems and digestive disorders.

Spring is the perfect time to enjoy fresh radishes in season. There are several varieties, but the most common is the red-skinned variety found at most supermarkets. Look for the ones with unblemished skin, firm texture and bright green leaves. Soaking washed and trimmed radishes in ice water for an hour or two before serving increases the crispness and improves the flavor. <<<

reader recipe

In this month's recipe, the humble salad topping takes center stage. This healthy, delicious, Asian-inspired salad brightly complements grilled foods, such as chicken, shrimp or pork.

Radish Salad

- _____ 1 lb. **radishes, halved and thinly sliced**
- _____ 1/2 **English or seedless cucumber, insides scooped out, thinly sliced**
- _____ 1/2 t **toasted sesame oil**
- _____ 3 T **rice wine vinegar**
- _____ 1 t **mirin (sweet Japanese cooking wine)**
- _____ **toasted sesame seeds**

Toss vegetables with toasted sesame oil, vinegar and mirin until coated evenly. Garnish with a light sprinkle of toasted sesame seeds. <<<

Serves 6. Calories per serving: 30; calories from fat per serving: 10.

>>> DO YOU HAVE A RECIPE OUR READERS WOULD ENJOY?

Send it to editor@usms.org, or mail to: Reader Recipe, c/o Bill Volckening, 1220 NW 119th Place, Portland, OR 97229.

READERS ASK: Nutrients Help Prevent Dry Skin

Q: Depending on the season, I get dry skin a lot. Can varying my nutrition seasonally help me prevent dry skin?

A: "In general, nutrient requirements are similar in all seasons," says Masters swimmer Melanie Brede, RD, a nutritionist at the University of Virginia Student Health Center Office of Health Promotion. "A foundation of sound nutrition throughout the year is the best policy for staying healthy."

According to Brede, vitamin D produced by skin cells in response to sun exposure varies seasonally.

"Because vitamin D can be stored in the body's fat cells, sun exposure of 15-20 minutes per day during the warmer months can help provide adequate amounts of this nutrient through winter," Brede says. She recommends drinking plenty of fluids, including vitamin D fortified milk, to hydrate your skin from the inside out.

Masters swimmer Bob Seebohar, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS, a sport dietitian and professional endurance coach, offers additional thoughts on hydration.

"Water transports nutrients to and from the organs (skin is the largest organ) in the body," Seebohar says. "Drinking enough water will ensure that your skin receives all of the necessary nutrients it needs to function properly." Seebohar says skin requires more water in low-humidity climates due to a higher rate of evaporation. He also points out that water comes from a variety of natural sources.

"Drinking water is great," Seebohar says, "but remember that fruits and vegetables also have a high water content, so be sure to include those in your daily eating regimen." <<<

>>> **Do you have a question for our experts? Send it to editor@usms.org, or mail to: Readers Ask, c/o Bill Volckening, 1220 NW 119th Place, Portland, OR 97229.**



Breastroker's Knee

The January-February 2008 issue of *SWIMMER* featured a story on swimmer Nancy Ridout, who found her healing waters after a long battle with swimmer's shoulder. Another injury familiar to swimmers is breastroker's knee.

According to husband-and-wife team Ross Hauser, M.D., and Marion Hauser, MS, RD, the condition involves pain in the medial knee (outside of the knee) and is seen primarily in breaststrokers who use the whip kick. Ross Hauser is medical director of Caring Medical & Rehabilitation Services in Oak Park, Ill. He and his wife are both avid athletes—Ross participates in triathlons, and Marion is a marathon runner.

The Hausers refer to research by J.C. Kennedy and R.J. Hawkins,

who conducted a 1974 survey on injuries to swimmers, and noticed that a high percentage of breaststroke swimmers complained of pain in the medial knee.

"The medial collateral ligament is the main supporting structure on the medial side of the knee," writes Ross Hauser. "It is also called the tibial collateral ligament. Tension in the ligament increases as the knee moves from flexion to extension," which is what happens during the whip kick in breaststroke. "All the force is generated right at, directly on, bulls-eye hit to the medial collateral ligament."

Traditional orthopedic medicine attributes breastroker's knee to improper whip kick technique. Some experts suggest taking off at least two months per year to allow the

medial collateral ligament to heal, but Hauser says most competitive athletes don't want to take off that long.

Hauser says swimmers with breastroker's knee report severe pain at the two points where the medical collateral ligament attaches. To treat the condition, Hauser often recommends prolotherapy, a simple, nonsurgical technique

that stimulates the body to repair the painful area when the natural healing process needs a little assistance.

If you suffer from knee pain associated with breaststroke kicking, consult your health care provider. <<<

>>> To read the complete article about breastroker's knee, go to www.caringmedical.com/media/article.asp?article_id=413.

You Are What You Drink

Americans don't always consider the number of calories in beverages. According to the Beverage Guidance Panel at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Americans consume approximately 21 percent of their calories from beverages.

In a report published by the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, the Beverage Guidance Panel summarized the health benefits and costs of beverages. Beverages were grouped in six categories ranging from water to calorie-rich beverages such as carbonated soft drinks.

Barry Popkin, PhD, who initiated the panel, also published a 2005 report, "Water and Food Consumption Patterns of U.S. Adults from 1999 to 2001." Popkin, director of the Interdisciplinary Obesity Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, identifies water as a key to losing weight.

"The study examined the relationship between water consumption and other drinking and eating patterns," Popkin wrote. "Within the sample, 87 percent consumed water, with an average daily consumption of 51.9 ounces (1.53 liters) per consumer. Water consumers drank fewer soft/fruit drinks and consumed 194 fewer calories per day." <<<

>>> See the Beverage Guidance Panel at www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/beverage.

The information in this department is not intended as a substitute for professional or medical advice. It is not intended to provide medical advice on personal health matters. For personal medical advice, consult your healthcare provider. If you are concerned about a particular medical condition or injury, see your healthcare provider for evaluation and care.

READERS ASK: Relief for Waterlogged Ears?

Q: Water often remains in my ears for hours after swimming. Fortunately, I haven't gotten an ear infection—but I worry about it. What's the best relief for my waterlogged ears?

A: "Bacterial and fungal infections are common problems associated with swimmers and people who engage in aquatic activities," says Virginia Masters swimmer Bronwyn Lewis, a family nurse practitioner who practices functional and regenerative medicine in Richmond, Va. "Bacteria or fungi can be introduced via pools or open water venues. The moisture from the ear

coupled with the warm environment creates an ideal atmosphere for infection."

Lewis says the most common ear problem among swimmers is *acute diffuse otitis externa*, also known as swimmer's ear. Symptoms include itching, ear pain, runny ears and hearing conductive hearing loss.

"The treatment includes oral or topical medication, pain control, and acidification of the ear canal," Lewis says, "but the best treatment is prevention. Using a rinse in the ears after swimming is very effective in preventing swimmer's ear. There are several such products available over the counter. If you have a dropper bottle, it is easy to create your own ear rinse."

The recipe Lewis recommends is seven parts white vinegar, three parts isopropyl alcohol and 1-2 drops of glycerin or vegetable oil mixed together in a dropper bottle. "After swimming, put a few drops in each ear and let it run out," Lewis explains. "The alcohol dries the ear quickly, the vinegar acts as an antifungal and antibacterial agent, and the oil keep the ear from becoming too dry. Avoid the use of cotton-tipped applicators." <<<

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