

# the healthy swimmer



Linda Steward

## reader recipe

Although the carrot is a common ingredient in winter soups, it most often plays a supporting role. When making homemade stock, carrots are added for color and later discarded. In this recipe, the carrot takes center stage as the base for a hearty, comforting soup that is easy to prepare, low in calories and fat, and full of flavor and color.

### Spiced Carrot Soup

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2 **tablespoons extra virgin olive oil**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 **onion, chopped**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2 pounds **carrots, chopped**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 tspn **turmeric powder**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 tspn **smoked paprika**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1/2 tspn **ground cumin seed**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1/2 tspn **ground cardamom**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1/2 tspn **ground coriander seed**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4 cups **vegetable broth**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **coarse salt (to taste)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **fresh ground black pepper (to taste)**

In a large stockpot, sweat onions in olive oil over medium heat until translucent. Add carrots and toss with turmeric, paprika, cumin, cardamom and coriander. Add vegetable broth and simmer over medium-low heat for about 20 minutes, until carrots are tender. Over a large bowl, strain the vegetables in a colander and reserve the broth. Puree the vegetables until they reach the consistency of mashed potatoes, and gradually combine the puree and reserved vegetable broth until reaching the desired consistency. If the soup is still too thick, add water in small amounts to adjust consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste. <<<

**Serves 6.** 140 calories per serving. 20 calories from fat.

#### >>> 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.

## In Season: Carrots

Winter is traditionally the season for root vegetables, and the carrot is one of the most popular, versatile and widely available root vegetables. The cultivated carrot is thought to have evolved from a wild plant found in Afghanistan, and the familiar garden vegetable is a variety that has evolved over many centuries.

Originally carrots were grown for the aromatic leaves and seeds, similar to parsley, fennel and dill. Although the leaves are edible, the carrot plant is now grown primarily for its taproot. The horn shaped root is usually orange, but sometimes white, red or purple. Sweet with natural sugars, carrots have a firm, crisp texture when raw and

soften when cooked.

The carrot gets its characteristic bright orange color from beta-carotene, which is metabolized into vitamin A. Consuming lots of carrots can cause hypercarotenemia, a condition in which the skin turns orange with no other serious side effects. Carrots are also low in calories, high in water content and rich in dietary fiber, antioxidants and minerals.

Carrots are frequently enjoyed raw as a snack, but can be boiled, steamed, roasted, fried and cooked in soups and stews. In French cuisine, carrots are part of the "holy trinity" or mirepoix, which refers to a combination of onions, carrots and celery used as a flavor base in a variety of dishes. <<<

## Rules, Etiquette Keep You Safe and Sane

One of the best ways to foster a healthy swimming environment and to stay safe is to follow the rules of the road. Distinguishing between rules and pool etiquette is key, but there may be a few gray areas depending on your facility. *SWIMMER* Editor Bill Volckening often hears from people seeking advice on rules and etiquette.

"Rules are typically posted at the pool, but some facilities publish them on information sheets," Volckening says. "If you visit a pool and don't see rules posted, it's always a good idea to ask about them."

Many facilities share a standard set of rules, such as "no running," "no swimming without lifeguard supervision," "no glass containers" and "no diving in shallow areas." But Volckening says etiquette can be tricky because the rules generally are not written.

"Etiquette is what helps keep things sane when sharing the swimming pool with others. My favorite source for standard pool etiquette is 'The Complete Book of Swimming,' by Phil Whitten," says Volckening, who, as a member of the Fitness Committee from 2001-2004, posted an excerpt from Whitten's book in the Fitness section of the USMS website.

Standard etiquette includes choosing the right lane according to your speed, circle swimming, learning how to pass, knowing how to enter and where to stop, and keeping your nails trimmed. According to Whitten, it's also helpful to follow the set when joining a workout group. <<<

>>> "The Complete Book of Swimming," by Dr. Phillip Whitten, is published by Random House, and is available through Amazon at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) To read the excerpt on etiquette, go to [www.usms.org/fintess/content/pooletiquette](http://www.usms.org/fintess/content/pooletiquette).

## Clean Hands Keep You Healthier

Swimmers are usually squeaky clean, but according to the Centers for Disease Control it's still important to remember to wash your hands to avoid potential illness and spread of germs during cold and flu season. Hand washing is simple, and the CDC says it is the best way to prevent infection and illness. Clean hands prevent infections. Keeping hands clean prevents illness at home, at school and at work.

The CDC recently promoted hand washing during its Clean Hands Campaign in December, but the rules apply year-round. At home, hand washing can prevent infection and illness from spreading from family member to family member and, sometimes, throughout a community. In the home, the basic rule is to wash hands before preparing food, before eating, after changing diapers, after coughing, sneezing or blowing one's nose into a tissue, and after using the bathroom. <<<



Silvia Jansen

### Wash Your Hands: The Right Way (Courtesy of the CDC)

When washing hands with soap and water:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15-20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.
- If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting. When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:
  - Apply product to the palm of one hand.
  - Rub hands together.
  - Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

## Readers Ask

**Q:** I visit the chiropractor periodically, but was wondering what are a few good tips for maintaining back alignment between visits? Does swimming help?

**A:** "Your back will feel good and function well if you maintain good endurance, strength and flexibility in your core muscles (back, abdominals, gluts) and thigh muscles (quads and hamstrings)," says Jessica Seaton, DC, of West Hollywood Aquatics, Calif.

"Swimming regularly will help to strengthen your core muscles and, to a lesser extent, your thigh muscles. Swimming will also improve your endurance in those muscles."

In addition to swimming, Seaton suggests stretching the hamstrings and quads.

"They attach to the pelvis and will become shortened by a lot of sitting," Seaton says. "Doing extra dryland abdominal strengthening will help both your back and your swimming." <<<

## Olympian Nall Promotes Healthy, Whole Foods

You are what you eat, and Olympic Gold Medalist Anita Nall learned that lesson the hard way. Nall, who set the swimming world on fire as a 15-year-old in 1992, set two world records in one day and captured gold, silver and bronze at the 1992 Olympic Summer Games in Barcelona. After her highly successful Olympic year, she faced a decade-long series of mysterious illnesses, which inhibited her efforts to return to the Olympics.

Through the years, Nall rediscovered health through whole foods and developed a passionate understanding of the healing power of food. She now promotes wellness through healthy nutrition through speaking engagements, workshops, consultation, educational CDs and her website, [www.phenomenallnutrition.com](http://www.phenomenallnutrition.com).

"Food plays a key role in our overall well-being," says Nall. "It is the one thing we have the power to control in our daily lives. Understanding the role that certain ingredients play in our health is critical to renewing our own health. Most food companies and industries are not in the business of making us well, but rather, they are in the business of making money. We, the consumers, are the ones who need to take charge of our own health through knowledge."

Nall says the key to sports nutrition is not exactly what we eat but when we eat. "It's important to refuel after workout, when our bodies are most receptive to carbohydrates," says Nall, whose whole family is gluten-free. "I suggest balancing carbs with protein, and try to refuel within the 45 minutes following workout. Whole foods are the best. Fruit and yogurt works, and depending on time, my ultimate meal is simply chicken, sweet potato and a salad." <<<

## Intel Develops Electronic House Calls

The world's biggest computer chip maker recently dove into the medical market with technology that lets doctors make house calls on patients without being there.

According to California-based Intel, medical personnel can monitor the health of chronically ill people from afar using Internet technology. The Intel Health Guide allows caregivers to keep tabs on heart functions, blood sugar levels and other factors of at-home patients. The system also allows caregivers to manage patient care remotely.

"The Health Guide is a step forward in offering more personalized and effective management of chronic health conditions in the home," says Intel Digital Health Group Vice President Louis Burns. "Intel has spent years researching the needs of both caregivers and patients, and we are now moving to launch a series of products that will help extend care from the hospital to the home."

Intel is working with healthcare providers to test Health Guide and plans a series of studies in the United States focused on people with illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. <<<



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