

Healthy Eating, Active Living: Rabbit Bugs knows best

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We are all familiar with that famous rabbit Bugs Bunny, and his claim to fame of always gnawing on a carrot. But why a carrot? Could it be the bright orange color, the crunchy texture, or the sweet taste? Or, could it be that Bugs knew how nutritious carrots are?

Carrots are an excellent source of beta carotene, which is converted to vitamin A in the body. They are also high in vitamins K and C, potassium, and fiber. By eating carrots, you will be offering your body many antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals that can help your vision and skin, boost your immune system, and prevent against cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Kern County growers harvest carrots almost year round. It is a very popular vegetable that can be eaten raw, boiled, or steamed. You can grate carrots on salads, include them in

sandwiches, muffins, cakes, breads or soups. So, start following Bugs' claim to fame and go grab some carrots to gnaw on.

Now that you are getting healthy with Bugs Bunny, you can get active with the Roger Rabbit — and yes, I'm talking about the dance!

Did you know that dancing can be a great form of exercise, most everyone can do it, and it can be done almost anywhere? All you need is a little music to get you in the groove. Turn on your radio, MP3 player, or iPod and boogie down. Not only will you be burning calories, but you will be promoting a healthy heart, increasing your strength, endurance, flexibility, and having fun while doing it. In fact, dancing has shown to burn as many calories as traditional exercises such as jogging or brisk walking. And, if you dance enough to be at an aerobic rate, you can burn up to 400 calories in an hour. Now the trick is to find the type of dance that is right for you, and that you will have fun with — let it be ballroom dancing, salsa, belly dancing, swing or the Roger Rabbit.

Here is a great, quick recipe that I'm sure you, your family and Bugs will enjoy.

Carrot and raisin salad

- 2 1/2 cups carrots, shredded
- 1 medium celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cups raisins
- 1/2 cup low-fat lemon-flavored yogurt

In a large bowl combine carrots, celery, and raisins. Add yogurt and mix. Refrigerate before serving. If desired, serve on salad greens. Makes four one-cup servings

Each serving provides: 80 calories, 3 grams total fat, 0 grams saturated fat, and 3 grams fiber.

Brittany Lorimer is a local registered dietitian. The healthy eating and active living articles will be published regularly and will feature locally grown crops.

This article was brought to you by Get Moving Kern, a community coalition that was developed to promote the wellness of children and adults in Kern County by promoting healthy eating and active living. For further information, please visit our website: www.Getmovingkern.org