

## ***Do not throw carrot residue, its fiber is good for obese people***

Less physical work and changes in food habits are the main causes of obesity chiefly in upper middle class. Obesity never comes alone; it is related to many other problems such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, joint pains and heart problems. To control obesity people run towards health clubs where even after paying a lot of money and spending much time no fruitful results are obtained.

Nutritionists always advise diets rich in fibre. Carrots are rich in

$\alpha$ -carotene which is an anti-oxidant and anti-cancer substance. It is reported that eating one carrot every day decreases heart attacks in women by 60% and risk of lung cancer in heavy smokers by 50 per cent. Carrot juice is also relished by people but its fibrous residue is thrown as waste material. A study was done by Parveen and her team at University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan on the effect of carrot residue fibre on body weight gain, blood lipid profile and carcass fat content in normal and fat-induced obese rats. Carrot residue collected after juice

extraction was dried in oven at 100° C for one hour and then at 40°C until constant weight. It was then powdered and stored in air-tight plastic bottles. The albino rats subjected to fat induced obesity were given diets containing carrot residue fibre. Serum cholesterol level of the induced obese rats was significantly reduced. This study revealed that long term use of a high fibre low fat diet is optimum for weight reduction. Thus carrot residue fibre can be used for the treatment of obesity and other related disorders. The carrot fibre has a good taste, smell and flavour and it can be used in baking biscuits suitable for the dietary control but after studying its effect on serum lipid profile [Parveen *et al*, *Proc Pak Acad Sci*, 2000, 37(1), 11].

## ***Cucumber and Americans, a healthy relationship***

As people are moving away from synthetic products and spicy foods, fresh packed vegetables and less salty and spicy pickle are being preferred. In America about 60 per cent of cucumber consumption is in fresh form with the remainder in pickled products. In general, cucumber use in the U.S. has been growing with consumption totaling 3 billion pounds in 1999. Indigenous to India, cucumber has been cultivated in U.S. and once considered mere animal fodder, it is now an important commercial and kitchen garden vegetable. The reason for this change is popularity of its nutritional value. Nutritionally, cucumbers are about 96% water, low in calories and free of fat, cholesterol and sodium. About 10.0 g of fresh cucumber (about a cup of slices) contains 10% of the daily requirement for Vit. C. Thus the Americans being concerned about good health and preferring low calorie food have developed taste for once discarded vegetable (Lucier & Lin, *Agric Outlook*, 2000, AGO, 277).

## ***Traditional method of storing cabbage and cauliflower***

In colder hilly regions throughout the winter months it is difficult to get fresh vegetables. Therefore, local people adopt age old indigenous practices for storing vegetables for domestic consumption.

For the purpose, farmers use trenches of variable size depending on their requirement. These trenches are covered by putting a roof of wooden planks/logs, layers of wheat straw or heap of earth to give it a shape of mound. The trench is sealed all around, except a small entry point in one corner. The healthy cabbage and cauliflower heads intact with roots are brought from fields and planted closely in the surface soil in the trenches in October-November. Sufficient water is also applied for holding the plants in soil. Water is again applied after two days. Thereafter entry point is closed leaving a small ventilation. The vegetables stored in this method are found garden fresh. However, scientific intervention is required to rectify certain lacunae of this practice [Singh *et al*, *Indian Farming*, 2001, 50(20), 46].