Item A
This petition seeks inclusion of Synthetic beta-CAROTENE on the National List as a non-agricultural (non-organic) substance allowed in or on processed products labeled as “organic” or “made with organic (specified ingredients),” at §205.605(b).

Item B
1. The substance’s chemical or material common name.
β-Carotene is a naturally occurring carotenoid. β-Carotene is the most abundant carotenoid in carrots and is found in other yellow and green vegetables. β-Carotene gives carrots their orange color.

Other chemical names for β-carotene are:
   All-trans-beta-carotene
   beta,beta-carotene
   beta-carotene, all-trans-
   Cyclohexene, 1,1’-(3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15,17-octadecanonaene-1,18-diy1)bis(2,6,6-trimethyl-, (all-E)-
   Provitamin A

The name ‘provitamin A’ reflects the fact that β-carotene is the normal dietary precursor of vitamin A.

2a. The name and address of the manufacturer/producer of the substance.
Synthetic crystalline β-carotene is produced by:
   BASF SE
   Carl-Bosch-Straße 38
   67056 Ludwigshafen/Germany

2b. The name, address and telephone number and other contact information of the petitioner.
   International Formula Council
   1100 Johnson Ferry Road NE, Suite 300
   Atlanta, GA 30342
   Contact: Mardi Mountford, Executive Vice President
   Phone: (678) 303-3027
   Email: mmountford@kellencompany.com
3. **The intended or current use of the substance as a nonagricultural ingredient.**

Synthetic β-carotene is used as a minor component of the edible oil blends in infant formulas to maintain the nutritional quality of the lipid component of the infant formula. Lipid provides half of the total energy value (calories) of infant formula, so maintaining its quality is important. β-Carotene acts as an antioxidant, preventing oxidation and rancidity. Rancid fat causes diarrhea in infants.

In conventional foods, synthetic β-carotene is GRAS, for use as a direct food ingredient to add color or to add vitamin A activity to a variety of foods.

4. **A list of the handling activities for which the substance will be used. If used for handling (including processing), the substance’s mode of action must be described.**

β-Carotene has two actions in the body, as a precursor to vitamin A and as an antioxidant and free radical scavenger.

β-Carotene is defined as a provitamin, as it is chemically related to the biologically active form of vitamin A and is converted by the body into this vitamin. Vitamin A has four essential physiological functions in the body: vision, growth, cell differentiation, and reproduction.

β-Carotene is a known quencher of free radicals and singlet oxygen. Free radicals are highly reactive species that include hydroxyl, peroxy, hypochlorite, superoxide, and alkoxy radicals and others. These entities react with the unsaturated bonds found in the lipids in all cellular membranes, resulting in loss of membrane fluidity, receptor alignment, and potentially cellular lysis. Free radical damage to enzymes and other proteins leads to inactivation and denaturation. Nucleic acids can also be damaged by free radicals, causing DNA mutations which may lead to carcinogenesis.

The antioxidant properties of β-carotene in the body make it useful as an ingredient in infant formulas. Infant formulas commonly contain a variety of polyunsaturated chain fatty acids (PUFA) and other physiologically important carotenoids as part of the lipid component of the overall nutrient system. Examples of PUFA include linoleic acid, alpha-linolenic acid, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), arachidonic acid (ARA), docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), and others. The Infant Formula Act and FDA regulations require a minimum amount of linoleic acid. Arachidonic and docosahexaenoic acids have been shown to provide beneficial effects in preterm infants such as enhanced brain and vision development. Examples of other physiologically important carotenoids are lutein and lycopene.

PUFA and other carotenoids tend to be more sensitive to oxidation than many other ingredients commonly found in nutritional formulas. Due to their chemical structure, exposure to heat and atmospheric levels of oxygen can cause a series of chemical reactions resulting in free radical formation. These free radicals can continue to break down these lipophilic components in an auto-oxidative process. The result is the development of undesirable off-flavors and odors and
the eventual degradation of the beneficial PUFA and carotenoids. PUFA and other more sensitive carotenoids are especially susceptible to oxidation during high-heat processing, spray drying processing, or even during relatively short storage periods after the formula has been sealed and packaged. Oxidative stability has become especially challenging with infant formulas that contain relatively high concentrations of arachidonic and docosahexaenoic acid for optimal eye and cognitive development.

One method of controlling the undesirable oxidation in powdered infant formulas is the addition of safe antioxidants soluble in edible oils, such as ascorbyl palmitate, β-carotene, mixed tocopherols, and others. β-Carotene has been found particularly useful as an antioxidant in infant formula oil blends at concentrations ranging from 6 to 12 ppm by weight of the total oil content of the infant formula.

As an antioxidant, however, β-carotene tends to discolor the otherwise white-appearing infant formula with a red-orange carotenoid hue. These colors can stain clothing and are often viewed as a negative by many consumers. Although off colors can be eliminated by simply removing the β-carotene from the formula, such removal is not generally desirable from a nutrition standpoint, and will also generally result in an unacceptable reduction in oxidation stability within the formula, with the subsequent development of rancid odors especially in those powder formulations containing ARA and DHA.

5. The source of the substance and a detailed description of its manufacturing or processing procedures from the basic component(s) to the final product.

Synthetic β-carotene is produced by the Wittig condensation of synthetic intermediates commonly used in the production of other carotenoids used in food, according to U.S. Patent No.2,917,539, issued December 15, 1959. A copy of this patent is available in Appendix A.

A detailed description of the production process of synthetic β-carotene, shown in Appendix B, is a “Trade secret” qualifying as Confidential Business Information (CBI).

6. A summary of any available previous reviews by State or private certification programs or other organizations of the petitioned substance.

Synthetic β-carotene has been added as an antioxidant to infant formula edible oil blends since before 1960. Synthetic β-carotene has not been reviewed by State or private organic certification programs for its use as a general food additive in foods labeled as “organic”.

On January 17, 2007, “beta-carotene extract color derived from carrots” was petitioned as a food colorant for inclusion on the National List at §205.606. It ultimately was approved by the NOSB for this purpose. “Beta-carotene extract color derived from carrots” was added to the National List on June 27, 2007. On 20 July, 2009, NOP received a petition to amend this listing of “beta-
Carotene extract color derived from carrots” to read “beta-carotene extract color derived from carrots and algae.”


The “Approved Legal Uses of the Substance” section of this document does not make a clear differentiation of critical distinction between the use of sundry sources of beta-carotene as a colorant subject to the FDA regulation at 21 CFR 73.95 and the use of beta-carotene as a GRAS food additive for use in infant formula and other foods permitted at 21 CFR 184.1245. 21 CFR 73.95 reads as follows:

§73.95 [beta]-Carotene.

(a) Identity. (1) The color additive is [beta]-carotene prepared synthetically or obtained from natural sources.

(2) Color additive mixtures for food use made with [beta]-carotene may contain only diluents that are suitable and that are listed in this subpart as safe in color additive mixtures for coloring foods.

(b) Specifications. [beta]-carotene shall conform to the following specifications:

   Physical state, solid.
   1 percent solution in chloroform, clear.
   Loss of weight on drying, not more than 0.2 percent.
   Residue on ignition, not more than 0.2 percent.
   Lead (as Pb), not more than 10 parts per million.
   Arsenic (as As), not more than 3 parts per million.
   Assay (spectrophotometric), 96-101 percent.

(c) Uses and restrictions. The color additive [beta]-carotene may be safely used for coloring foods generally, in amounts consistent with good manufacturing practice, except that it may not be used to color those foods for which standards of identity have been promulgated under section 401 of the act unless added color is authorized by such standards.

(d) Labeling. The label of the color additive and any mixtures prepared therefrom and intended solely or in part for coloring purposes shall conform to the requirements of Sec. 70.25 of this chapter.

(e) Exemption from certification. Certification of this color additive is not necessary for the protection of the public health and therefore batches thereof are exempt from the certification requirements of section 721(c) of the act.

Infant formulas do not contain added color, which would require labeling as “artificial color”! The ingredients in an infant formula must comply with the food additive regulations of FDA. In this case, the regulation at 21 CFR 184.1245 applies. 21 CFR 184.1245 reads as follows:
Petition to Include Synthetic beta-CAROTENE at 7 CFR 205.605

§184.1245 Beta-carotene.

(a) Beta-carotene (CAS Reg. No. 7235-40-7) has the molecular formula C_{40}H_{56}. It is synthesized by saponification of vitamin A acetate. The resulting alcohol is either reacted to form vitamin A Wittig reagent or oxidized to vitamin A aldehyde. Vitamin A Wittig reagent and vitamin A aldehyde are reacted together to form beta-carotene.

(b) The ingredient meets the specifications of the Food Chemicals Codex, 3d Ed. (1981), p. 73, which is incorporated by reference. Copies are available from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20418, or available for inspection at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/code--of-federal--regulations/ibr--locations.html.

(c) In accordance with Sec. 184.1(b)(1), the ingredient is used in food with no limitation other than current good manufacturing practice. The affirmation of this ingredient as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) as a direct human food ingredient is based upon the following current good manufacturing practice conditions of use:

(1) The ingredient is used as a nutrient supplement as defined in Sec. 170.3(o)(20) of this chapter.

(2) The ingredient is used in the following foods at levels not to exceed current good manufacturing practice: dairy product analogs as defined in Sec. 170.3(n)(10) of this chapter; fats and oils as defined in Sec. 170.3(n)(12) of this chapter; and processed fruits and fruit juices as defined in Sec. 170.3(n)(35) of this chapter. Beta-carotene may be used in infant formula as a source of vitamin A in accordance with section 412(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or with regulations promulgated under section 412(g) of the act.

(d) Prior sanctions for this ingredient different from the uses established in this section do not exist or have been waived.

The evaluation of beta-carotene extract color derived from carrots prepared by the NOSB Handling Committee in February 2007 properly made this distinction when it wrote: “Color additives, in general, cannot, by definition qualify for GRAS status, as GRAS only applies to food additives.” Consequently, it would violate FDA regulation to use the colorant “beta-carotene extract color derived from carrots (or algae)” in an infant formula. An additional consideration is that the allergenic principles in carrots (or algae) may be present in an extract and as such make these sources undesirable in the diet of newborn infants.

The July 15, 2011, Technical Evaluation Report rightly points out that FDA at 21 CFR 101.54(g)(3) recognizes the antioxidant properties of beta-carotene: “Beta-carotene may be a subject of the claim when the level of vitamin A present as beta-carotene in the food that bears the claim is sufficient to qualify for the claim. For example, for the claim "good source of antioxidant beta-carotene," 10 percent or more of the RDI for vitamin A must be present as beta-carotene per reference amount customarily consumed.”
7. Information regarding EPA, FDA, and State regulatory authority registrations, including registration numbers.

The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) specification for synthetic β-carotene is included in Appendix C.

β-Carotene is regulated by FDA. Certification of this color additive when used as a food is not necessary for the protection of the public health and therefore batches thereof are exempt from the requirements of section 706(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act: 21CFR 73.96. Certification of this color additive when used as a drug is not necessary for the protection of the public health and therefore batches thereof are exempt from the requirements of section 706(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act: 21CFR73.1095. β-Carotene added directly to human food is affirmed as generally recognized as safe (GRAS): 21 CFR 184.1245. A copy of this regulation is included in Appendix C.

8a. The Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) Registry Number for β-carotene is 7235-40-7.

8b. Labels of infant formulas containing synthetic β-carotene.

See Appendix D

9a. The substance’s physical properties

β-Carotene forms deep purple, hexagonal prisms. It is sparingly soluble in methanol and ethanol and moderately soluble in oils, ether, and petroleum ether. β-Carotene is insoluble in water.

β-Carotene absorbs oxygen from the air giving rise to inactive, colorless oxidation products. The crystalline material is stored under inert gas (nitrogen) or suspended in edible oils or in an aqueous solution containing antioxidants and protected from light.

The empirical formula of β-carotene is C_{40}H_{56}. Its molecular weight is 536.87.

9b. Chemical mode of action

(a) Chemical interactions: β-Carotene interacts with PUFA and other fat-soluble carotenoids, such as lycopene and lutein, to enhance the oxidative stability of edible oils.

(b) Toxicity and environmental persistence: β-Carotene, as such or as a natural component of carrots, melons, and sweet potatoes, is compostable and does not persist in the environment. The mammalian body converts β-carotene to vitamin A only if the body requires vitamin A. Eating pureed carrots and other highly yellow vegetables can lead to the harmless and reversible condition of carotenemia in infants and adults. See point (d).
Petition to Include Synthetic beta-CAROTENE at 7 CFR 205.605

(c) **Environmental impacts from its use and/or manufacture:** Synthetic β-carotene is produced in Ludwigshafen, Germany, according to an ISO 14000 Environmental Management System. The ISO 14000 Environmental Management System certificate for Ludwigshafen is available in Appendix E. The production process conforms to the strict environmental requirements of Germany and the European Union.

(d) **Effects on human health:** β-Carotene has well-established physiological effects. The obvious but harmless cosmetic effect of excessive intake of food or dietary supplements high in β-carotene is the condition of “carotenemia,” a reversible condition associated with a deep orange discoloration of the skin. This is not a worry in this application, since the amounts of β-carotene used in infant formula are in the micro range. The most well-known effect of β-carotene is its vitamin A activity. β-Carotene is a precursor to vitamin A, which is essential for normal function of the retina; in the form of retinal, it combines with opsins (red pigment in the retina) to form rhodopsin (visual purple), which is necessary for visual adaptation to darkness. It is also necessary for growth of bone, testicular and ovarian function, and embryonic development, and for regulation of growth and differentiation of epithelial tissues. β-Carotene also functions physiologically as an antioxidant and free radical scavenger.

(e) **Effects on soil organisms, crops, or livestock:** Sources of β-carotene in the diets of dairy cows are responsible for the yellow color of butter. Forage carrots are fed in Europe to livestock with no ill effects.

### 10. Safety information about the substance including a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and a substance report from the National Institute of Environmental Health Studies.

The MSDS and product specification of Lucarotin 30 SUN, the material used to add β-carotene to the edible oils of infant formula products, are available in Appendix E. This material is a 30% dispersion of crystalline β-carotene in sunflower oil.

The Food and Drug Administration has affirmed the GRAS status of β-carotene at 21 CFR 184.1245 (see Appendix C). The Food Chemicals Codex specification for β-carotene is available in Appendix E.

There is no substance report from NIEHS. However, the Hazardous Substance DataBank information for β-carotene available on the National Library of Medicine and created by the National Toxicology Program is attached as Appendix F.
11. Research information about the substance which includes comprehensive substance research reviews and research bibliographies.

A comprehensive review entitled “Carotenoids: Actual knowledge on food sources, intakes, stability and bioavailability and their protective role in humans,” was recently published in 2009 in the journal Molecular Nutrition and Food Research\(^1\). This review is available in Appendix G.

12. A “Petition Justification Statement” which provides justification for inclusion of \(\beta\)-carotene on the National List, §205.605(b)

Human colostrum contains very high concentrations of \(\beta\)-carotene (2130 ±1660 micrograms/L).\(^2\) Carotenoids in colostrum are up to five times higher than in mature human milk,\(^3\) so that the human milk-fed, term infant attains serum levels of both vitamin E and \(\beta\)-carotene comparable to those in the adult within 4 to 6 days of breast-feeding. When lactation is fully established, human milk \(\beta\)-carotene falls to 380 from 490 mcg/L.\(^4\) Providing additional \(\beta\)-carotene in the lactating woman’s diet can increase her \(\beta\)-carotene levels by as much as three-fold.\(^5\)

Unless an infant formula is deliberately fortified with carotenoids such as \(\beta\)-carotene, it will contain very small amounts of these physiologically active substances. Sommerburg et al.\(^6\) measured carotenoids in eight infant formula preparations and could not detect any \(\beta\)-carotene in four of them. Formula-fed infants had different plasma carotenoid profiles compared to human milk-fed infants. \(\beta\)-Carotene was significantly lower in formula-fed infants [14 (0-32) mcg/L, median and interquartile ranges] than in infants soon after birth [24 (19-310) mcg/L, \(P<0.05\) and in human milk-fed infants [32 (22-63) mcg/L, \(P<0.05\)].

The amount of \(\beta\)-carotene deliberately added to infant formula ranges from 125 to 450 mcg/L of reconstituted formula.

In the United States, ‘baby foods’ are introduced into the diet of infants at four to six months of age. The most popular vegetable baby foods are the yellow vegetables carrots, winter squash, and sweet potatoes. Carrots, from which the name “carotene” originates, contain about 100 ppm

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of β-carotene, or 3,000 mcg per ounce of carrots. A four-ounce serving of baby carrots can easily provide 10,000 mcg of β-carotene!

β-Carotene functions as an excellent antioxidant in infant formula when added at levels found in human milk. It is important to protect the fats and oils used in infant formulas from oxidation. Fat oxidation is a real danger in powdered infant formula, since there are dried by high temperature spray-drying in an oxygen-containing atmosphere.

Only synthetic β-carotene is a GRAS substance according to the FDA regulation. Beta-carotene extract color is approved as a colorant but it is not approved as a GRAS food additive, so it cannot be used as a source of β-carotene in infant formula.

13. Confidential Business Information Statement

A detailed description of the production process of synthetic β-carotene, shown in Appendix B, is a “Trade secret” qualifying as Confidential Business Information (CBI). This description is a “Trade secret” that is (1) commercially valuable, (2) used in the applicant’s business, and (3) maintained in secrecy.
Appendices

Petition for addition to the National List of the Synthetic beta-CAROTENE on the National List of Substances Allowed as Ingredients in or on Processed Products Labeled as “organic” or “made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s)).”

Appendix A – U. S. Patent for β-Carotene Manufacture

Appendix B – CBI - Detailed Manufacturing Process

Appendix C – U.S. Regulations and International Standards
  - U.S. regulation 21 CFR 184.1245
  - JECFA

Appendix D – Infant Formula Product Labels

Appendix E – MSDS & Specifications
  - Lucarotin 30 Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)
  - Lucarotin 30 Specifications
  - ISO 14000 Environmental Management System certificate for BASF Ludwigshafen
  - FCC Specifications

Appendix F – Hazardous Substances Data Bank report

Appendix G – Scientific review of Carotenoids
Appendix A

Appendix A

Page A1

2,917,539

Patented Dec. 15, 1959

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PROCESS FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF CAROTENOIDS

No Drawing. Application December 20, 1956 Serial No. 629,457

Claims priority, application Switzerland December 29, 1955

18 Claims. (Cl. 260—488)

The present invention relates to a new process for the manufacture of carotenoids.

The process of this invention comprises condensing by means of a metal-organic reaction, 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-di-yne (hereinafter called C_{12}-hydrocarbon) at both ends with a compound selected from the group consisting of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl), 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexen-1-yl) and 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-als wherein R represents a member selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy acyloxy (hereinafter called, respectively, &beta-dehydro-C_{12}-aldehyde, and &beta-C_{12}-aldehyde and iso-C_{12}-aldehyde when R represents hydrogen), and hydrolyzing the resulting condensation product to the corresponding dial compound (hereinafter called C_{12}-diol). Subjecting the dial compound to a treatment causing elimination of two molecules of water and allyl rearrangement, partially hydrogenating the triple bonds in the resulting carotenoid compound, and isomerizing the resulting di-al compound to the all-trans compound.

The carotenoids obtained by the present process are useful as dyestuffs for foods, e.g., for dyeing margarine, oils, butter, fats, ice-cream powder and the like, in order to give them orange to red shades. Some of these carotenoids have also a vitamin A-like activity.

The starting compounds required for carrying out the process of this invention may be prepared, for example, in the manner described hereinafter. In this specification temperatures are given in degrees centigrade.

C_{12}-hydrocarbon—3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-di-yne

0.1 mole of ethereal phenyl-lithium solution was added, at 0°, to a suspension of 0.1 mole of triphenyl-(3-methyl-2-penten-4-yn-1-yl)-phosphonium bromide (M.P. 152—155°; obtained by condensing triphenylphosphine with 1-bromo-3-methyl-2-penten-4-ynyl in glacial acetic acid) in 150 ml. of absolute ether, and the mixture was stirred under nitrogen for 3 hours. The resulting dark-red solution contained triphenyl-(3-methyl-2-penten-4-yn-1-ylidene)-phosphine. To this solution was added an ethereal solution of 0.1 mole of 3-methyl-2-penten-4-yn-1-ol, and the reaction mixture was heated at 40° for 1 hour. The reaction mixture was then filtered, the filtrate was washed neutral with water, then dried and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was dissolved in a small quantity of ethanol or methanol, and the solution was cooled to —40°. On warming the C_{12}-hydrocarbon crystallized. By sublimation in a high vacuum there was obtained a product melting at 91—93° and having absorption maxima in the ultra-violet spectrum at 304, 318 and 354 μ.

(E_{1}^{	ext{Δmax}}=3210, 3495 and 3240)

The ethoxy-acetylene carbonyl obtained by condensing ethoxy-acetylene with 2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexane was partially hydrogenated at the triple bond in a manner known per se, the resulting ethoxy-ethylen carbonyl was hydrolysed with acid, the resulting (2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexylidene)-acetaldehyde was acetalised, the acetal was condensed in the presence of an acidic condensation agent with a propenyl ether, and the resulting condensation product was treated with acid. The resulting aldehyde shows an U.V. absorption maximum at 288 μ (in petroleum ether); the phenylsemicarbazone melts at 158—159°.

4 - acetoxy - iso-C_{12}-aldehyde.——4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-acetoxy-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-ol

138 g. of 2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-4-one (which can be made, for example, from isophorone by known procedure; compare Kharasch, , Journ Sci., American Chemical Society, 63, 2308 (1941)) in 50 ml. of glacial acetic acid were stirred for two hours at 0—10° with 160 ml. of peracetic acid (containing 530 mg. of peracetic acid per ml.) and the mixture was allowed to stand overnight 20°. Then, while adding ice, the reaction mixture was made weakly alkaline (pH about 8) by adding 30% aqueous NaOH solution, and the reaction mixture was shaken for one hour at 20°. Then the mixture was extracted twice, each time with 800 ml. of diethyl ether, and the ether solutions were washed once with 200 ml. of saturated ammonium chloride solution. The ether solutions were combined and dried over sodium sulfate, the solvent was driven off, and the residue was distilled in high vacuum. A forerun passed over between 70 and 80°, and then 2,6,6-trimethyl-2-cyclohexen-1-ol, which was obtained as an almost colorless oil having B.P. 110—112°/0.1 mm. Hg, n_{D}^{20}=1.501, U.V. absorption maximum at 226 μ (E_{2}^{1}=1110 in petroleum ether solution), after standing for some time. The phenylsemicarbazones had M.P. 189—190°, U.V. absorption maxima at 240.5 μ and 285 μ (E_{2}^{1}=807 and 778 in ethanol).

To 154 g. of 2,6,6-trimethyl-2-cyclohexen-1-ol in 200 ml. of glacial acetic acid and 500 ml. of water were quickly added dropwise 70 g. of chromic anhydride in 200 ml. of water, while stirring and cooling, so that the temperature did not rise above 30°. The mixture was then stirred overnight at 20°. Then the reaction mixture was saturated with ammonium chloride and was extracted with 1000 ml. of petroleum ether (boiling range 30—60°). The aqueous layer was again extracted in a second separatory funnel with 500 ml. of petroleum ether. The petroleum ether solutions were washed with saturated ammonium chloride solution to which a little ammonia had been added, and then with pure saturated ammonium chloride solution. The washed extracts were dried over calcium chloride. The solvent was then driven off. The product, 2,6,6-trimethyl-2-cyclohexene-1,4-diene, was distilled under a water pump vacuum; B.P. 92—94°/111 mm. Hg yellow oil which solidified to crystalline form in the refrigerator, n_{D}^{20}=1.490, U.V. absorption maximum at 238 μ (E_{2}^{1}=942 in petroleum ether). The phenylsemicarbazone had M.P. 190°, then resolidified and melted again at 230°, U.V. absorption maximum at 242.5 μ and 325.5 μ (E_{2}^{1}=875 and 580 in ethanol).

65 g. of 2,6,6-trimethyl-2-cyclohexene-1,4-diene in 250 ml. of glacial acetic acid were slowly reacted with 130 g. of zinc dust, while stirring, so that the temperature did not rise above 50°. Then the reaction mixture was stirred for an additional period of one hour. The resulting mixture was filtered, diluted with 1000 ml. of water and then saturated with ammonium chloride. The mixture was
extracted twice, each time with 800 ml of petroleum ether (boiling range 30–60°C). The petroleum ether solutions were washed with 300 ml of saturated ammonium chloride solution to which 100 ml of glacial acetic acid, 26 ml of water and 32 ml of sodium acetate were added, and then the residue was washed with pure saturated ammonium chloride solution. (In case a portion of the product crystallizes from the petroleum ether solution, it is filtered off, the crystalline material is dissolved in diethyl ether, then the diethyl ether solution is washed as indicated above over sodium sulfate and then combined with the petroleum ether solution.) The solvent was driven off until the product 2,6,6-trimethyl-1,4-cyclohexanediene started to crystallize out; colorless needles, M.P. 63–65°, having no absorption maximum in the ultraviolet spectrum between 220 and 280 mμ. The phenyl-semicarbazone had M.P. 218–220°, U.V. absorption maximum at 250 mμ (Eλ=1036 in ethanol).

34.6 g of 2,6,6-trimethyl-1,4-cyclohexanide, 100 ml of benzene, 19 g of ethylene glycol and 0.2 g of p-toluene-sulfonic acid were refluxed for seven hours while separating the water which was formed. After cooling, the reaction mixture was poured into 300 ml of 5% sodium bicarbonate solution, and the 2,6,6-trimethyl-4-ethylenedioxy-1-cyclohexanone product was obtained by extraction with diethyl ether and distillation of the extract. The product was obtained as a colorless oil, having B.P. 70°/0.02 mm Hg, ν234=1.469.

To a lithium amide suspension prepared by dissolving 6.7 g of lithium in 2000 ml of liquid ammonia were added slowly, while stirring, 52 g of 1-methoxy-2-methyl-3-butyne-2-ol. The mixture was stirred for one hour and then 79 g of 2,6,6-trimethyl-4-ethylenedioxy-1-cyclohexanone were added, and the reaction mixture was stirred overnight at the boiling temperature of the ammonia. 60 g of ammonium chloride were added and then the ammonia was driven off. The residue was taken up in diethyl ether, and insoluble material was filtered off; the ether solution was washed with a saturated solution of ammonium chloride, then was dried over sodium sulfate, and the ether was driven off. The residue was suspended in 450 ml of petroleum ether and was extracted four times, each time with 300 ml of 70% methanol. The methanol extracts were washed three times, each time 150 ml of petroleum ether, then were diluted with saturated ammonium chloride solution and the precipitated material was taken up in diethyl ether. The ether solution was washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate, and the ether was driven off. There were thus obtained 92 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-ethylenedioxy-1-hydroxy -1-cyclohexyl)-2-methyl-1-methoxy-3-butyne-2-ol as a yellow viscous oil.

92 g of the latter were dissolved in 3000 ml of dry diethyl ether, were mixed while stirring at 0–5° with a solution of 22.5 g of lithium aluminum hydride in 300 ml of dry diethyl ether, and the reaction mixture was refluxed for four hours. Then the reaction mixture was cooled with ice, 250 ml of methanol were added slowly while stirring at 0–5°, and the clear solution was poured into a mixture of 100 g of ice and 600 ml of saturated ammonium chloride solution. The precipitated aluminum hydride was filtered off, the precipitate was washed with diethyl ether, and the washings were added to the filtrate. The combined liquids were washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and the solvents were driven off. The residue was partitioned between petroleum ether and 70% methanol, in the manner indicated above, and from the methanol extracts there were obtained 70 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-ethylenedioxy-1-hydroxy-1-cyclohexyl)-2-methyl-1-methoxy-3-buten-2-ol as a light-yellow, viscous oil.

70 g of the latter were mixed with 140 ml of fomric acid and the mixture was heated for 25 minutes at 100°. The reaction mixture was poured onto ice and extracted with di-ethyl ether, the ethereal solution was washed with water and with dilute sodium bicarbonate solution, dried over sodium sulfate, and the ether was driven off. The residue was dissolved in 200 ml of glacial acetic acid, 26 ml of water and 32 ml of sodium acetate were added, and the mixture was heated at 95° for two hours. Then it was diluted with ice water, and was extracted with diethyl ether, the ether extract was washed with water and with dilute sodium bicarbonate solution, dried over sodium sulfate and the ether was driven off. The residue was distilled in vacuo, whereby yielding 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-oxo-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-ol as a yellow oil having B.P. ca. 110°/0.02 mm Hg, ν234=1.555 (U.V. absorption maximum at 284 mμ in petroleum ether).

A solution of 31 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-oxo-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-ol in 34 ml of orthoformic acid ethyl ester and 7 ml of absolute ethanol was mixed with 0.65 ml of orthophosphoric acid and 0.05 g of p-toluenesulfonic acid, and the mixture was allowed to stand for 24 hours at room temperature. 7 ml of pyridine were added and then the mixture was poured upon ice and dilute sodium bicarbonate solution. The reaction mixture was extracted with petroleum ether, the petroleum ether extract was washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate, the solvent was driven off and the residue was dried in vacuo at 60°. There were thus obtained 40 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-oxo-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-1,1-diethoxy-2-buten (U.V. absorption maximum at 248 mμ in petroleum ether).

40 g of the latter product were dissolved in 600 ml of dry diethyl ether and were mixed slowly, while stirring at 0–5°, with a solution of 2.8 g of lithium aluminum hydride in 40 ml of diethyl ether. The reaction mixture was stirred for one hour at room temperature, then it was cooled to 0–5°; 20 ml of methanol were added slowly, and the reaction mixture was poured upon ice and saturated ammonium chloride solution. The precipitated aluminum hydroxide was filtered off and washed with diethyl ether, the ether was added to the filtrate, the combined liquids were dried over sodium sulfate and the solvent material was driven off. There was obtained 39.5 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-hydroxy-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-1,1-diethoxy-2-buten.

39.5 g of the latter were acetylated by mixing it with 40 ml of pyridine and 20 ml of acetic anhydride and permitting the mixture to stand for 20 hours. The reaction mixture was taken up in diethyl ether. The ether solution was washed with water, dried over sodium sulfate and the ether was driven off. There were thus obtained 31 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-acetoxy-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-ol (U.V. absorption maximum at 284 mμ in petroleum ether).

4-acetoxy-9-Cyclodehyde. — 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-acetoxy-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-ol

31 g of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-acetoxy-1-cyclohexylidene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-ol were dissolved in 40 ml of toluene, mixed with 16 g of isopropenyl acetate and 0.2 g of p-toluenesulfonic acid and the mixture was heated at 120–140° while continuously removing the acetone which was formed. After approximately two hours, the reaction mixture was cooled down, poured into ice water and extracted with petroleum ether. The petroleum ether solution was washed with cold sodium bicarbonate solution and then with water, dried over sodium sulfate
and the solvent was distilled off. There were thus obtained 34 g. of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-acetoxy-1-cyclohexen-
1-yl)-2-methyl-1-acetox-y-1,3-butadiene (U.V. absorption
maximum at 262 ms in petroleum ether).

34 g. of the latter was dissolved in 750 ml of methanol,
mixed with 75 ml of water and 27 g. of sodium bicar-
bonate and the mixture was refluxed for six hours while
stirring. Then the reaction mixture was diluted with ice
water, extracted with diethyl ether, the ether solution
was washed with water, dried over sodium sulphate and
the ether was driven off. In order to achieve acetylation
of the hydroxyl group, attached to the ring, the residue
previously containing at least some 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-
4-hydroxy-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-al, was
mixed with 60 ml of pyridine and 30 ml of acetic
anhydride and the mixture was allowed to stand for 20
hours at room temperature. 100 ml of ice water were
added and the mixture was then extracted with diethyl
ether. The ether solution was washed with cold sodi-
um bicarbonate solution and then with water, dried
over sodium sulphate and the solvent was driven off.
The 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-acetoxy-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2-methyl-
2-buten-1-al thus obtained is a yellowish oil and shows U.V.
absorption maximum at 234 ms (petroleum ether). Its
phenylsemicarbazone melts at 190-192°; U.V. absorption
maximum at 238 and 276 ms (petroleum ether).

Dehydro-β-C40-aldehyde. — 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclo-
hexadien-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-al

136 parts by weight of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-2-cyclohexen-
1-yldiene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-al together with 97 parts
by weight of isopropl enyl acetate and 0.7 part by weight
of p-toluene-sulphonic acid were heated at 100-140° for
3-4 hours, while passing a slow current of nitrogen
through the mixture, the acetone formed during the rea-
tion being continuously removed from the reaction
mixture by distillation. After cooling, the thus obtained
 crude 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-2-methyl-
1-acetox-y-1,3-butadiene was directly hydrolysed. For
this purpose, 650 parts by volume of methanol, 65 parts
by volume of water and 46 parts by weight of sodi-
um bicarbonate were added, and the mixture was
refluxed for 5-6 hours, while stirring. The reaction mix-
ture was then poured into 2000 parts by volume of ice
water and weakly acidified with dilute sulphuric acid.
The reaction product was taken up in ether, and the
etheral solution was washed with sodium bicarbonate
solution and dried over sodium sulphate. After removal
of the solvent by distillation, the residue was distilled in
a high vacuum. There were thus obtained 98 parts by
weight of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-2-
methyl-2-buten-1-al; B.P.80°/0.05 mm. Hg; mP=1.530;
U.V. absorption maxima at 224 and 266 ms.

E1% = 795 and 345

respectively (in petroleum ether). Phenylsemicarbazone:
melting point 184-185°.

In the first step of the process according to this in-
vention a metal-organic derivative of the C40-hydrocar-
bon is reacted with β-dehydro-C40-aldehyde, or with a
β-C40 or iso-C40-aldehyde in which the oxygen of an oxy-
gen-containing group which does not take place in the
reaction may be attached to the 4-position of the nucleus.
Metal-organic compounds which are particularly suitable
for this reaction include the alkali metal derivatives and
the magnesium-organic derivatives of the C40-hydrocar-
bon. These metal-organic derivatives can be obtained in
a known manner by reacting the C40-hydrocarbon with the
same correspond ing metals or derivatives thereof, such as
sodium and lithium amide, alkyl- or aroyl-lithium com-
pounds, and alkyl- or aryl-magnesium halides, e.g. phenyl-
methyl, phenyl-magnesium bromide and ethyl-magnesium
bromide. The reaction is best carried out in an inert
solvent, such as ether, benzene and the like, or in liquid
ammonia. It is advantageous to use the same reaction
medium and the same reaction vessel as used for the
preparation of the metal-organic derivative. The con-
densation takes place already at room temperature and
can be accelerated and completed by heating. In order
to avoid secondary reactions, it is advantageous to effect
the condensation in an inert atmosphere, e.g. under nit-ogen. After completion of the reaction, the resulting
metal-organic reaction product is hydrolyzed in a known
manner, e.g. by means of water, ammonium acetate solu-
tion, etc. The obtained C40-alldiol need not be purified
before being further reacted. It may be identified by the
Zerewitinoff test and the U.V. absorption spectrum.
This diol consists of a mixture of stereoisomeric forms.

In the second step of the present invention, the C40-
diol is subjected, if desired after esterification, to a
reaction causing splitting off of two molecules of water
or acid and allyl rearrangement. Rearrangement and
splitting off of water or acid may also be brought about
by the action of aqueous anhydrous hydrochloric acid.
Conveniently, the C40-alldiol is esterified, e.g. acetylated,
prior to the cleavage and rearrangement. A suitable
mode of carrying out this step consists in treating a
solution of the C40-diol or of an ester thereof in an inert
solvent, such as ether, methylene chloride, dioxane and
the like, with anhydrous hydrochloric acid. Only a small
quantity of acid need be used if the reaction is ac-
celerated by heating. It is advantageous to effect the
reaction in ethyl ether and to use an excess of alcoholic
hydrochloric acid. According to another mode of exe-
cuting this step, the C40-diol or an ester thereof is treated
in a halogenated hydrocarbon having a high di-
pole moment with aqueous hydrochloric acid at a tem-
perature below 0°, and subsequently hydrogen halide is split
off from the resulting halogenated compound by means
of water or a basic compound. Solvents which may be
used for this purpose include methylene chloride and
chloroform, and concentrated aqueous hydrobromic
acid may be used as the aqueous hydrohalic acid. The
elimination of water or acid may also be performed by
means of phosphorus oxychloride in pyridine. There are
thus obtained carotenoids which still contain triple bonds
in the positions 11,12 and 11',12' instead of double
bonds and which have a characteristic U.V. absorption
spectrum.

The third step of the process of this invention con-
sists in partially hydrogenating the triple bonds. This
hydrogenation may be carried out in suspension, e.g. in
petroleum ether, tol uene and the like, preferably by means
of a deactivated palladium catalyst and in the presen-
ce of quinoline. The carotenoids obtained by parial
hydrogenation have the cis-configuration in the result-
ing double bonds and possess an U.V. absorption
spectrum which is typical of this type of compounds.

In the fourth step of the present process the cis-car-
tenoids are isomerized to the corresponding all-trans
compounds. The isomerization is carried out in a known
manner, for example by the action of iodine or light in
solution, but preferably by heating in petroleum ether
thereof. The present invention will now be illustrated by
the following examples, however without being limited
therein.

EXAMPLE 1

β-Carotene

3.6 g. (0.023 mole) of 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-
1,9-di-yle were dissolved in 50 ml of absolute ether,
and to the solution was added 0.68 mole of ethereal
phenyl-lithium solution. The mixture was refluxed for
30 minutes. Then a solution of 11 g. (0.05 mole) of
4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-
buten-1-al in 100 ml of ether were added dropwise, and
the reaction mixture was boiled for 2 hours. The reac-
tion mixture was then hydrolyzed with aqueous am-
monium acetate solution, and the ethereal layer was
separated, dried and concentrated. The residue, i.e. 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-3,7,12,16 -tetramethyl-4,15-di-hydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-oxadecapentaen-5,13-di-yl, was a resinous product (having 19 active hydrogen atoms and absorption maxima in the ultra-violet spectrum at 326 and 341 μ) which was used for the next step without any further purification. The resin was dissolved in 200 ml. of methylene chloride, 10 ml. of glacial acetic acid were added to the solution, and the mixture was cooled to −40°C in a carbon dioxide atmosphere, while stirring. Then, 9 ml. of aqueous hydrobromic acid (60%) were added in one portion, the mixture was kept at −35°C for 1½ minutes, and subsequently 200 ml. of ice water was run into the mixture. After further stirring the mixture for 2 hours at 0°C, the methylene chloride layer was separated, washed with water and sodium bicarbonate solution, dried with Na2SO4 and concentrated in vacuo. The residue, i.e. 11,12,11'-12'-bis-dehydro-β-carotene, was a tough resin of an off-white solid (having no active hydrogen atoms and possessing absorption maxima in the ultra-violet spectrum at 334 and 408 μ). This product can be purified by chromatography. The crude product can also be used for the next step without any preliminary purification.

The residue of 11,12'-11',12'-bis-dehydro-β-carotene were dissolved in 100 ml. of petroleum ether (boiling range 80-100°C), and the solution was hydrogenated under normal conditions after the addition of 0.5 ml of quinoline and 5 g. of a lead-poisoned palladium catalyst. After the calculated amount of hydrogen had been absorbed, the catalyst was removed by filtration and the filtrate was extracted with dilute sulfuric acid to remove the quinoline. By concentrating the solution in the usual manner there was obtained 11,12',11',12'-dic-is-carotene. The product was purified by recrystallisation from benzene-alcohol. The purified product melts at 154°C; absorption maxima in the ultra-violet spectrum at 276, 334, 338, 401 and 405 μ. The isomerisation was effected by heating the product for 10 hours at 90-100°C in high-boiling petroleum ether in a carbon dioxide atmosphere. The resulting β-carotene melted at 180°C; U.V. absorption maxima at 452 and 480 μ. 

**Example 2**

**Bis-dehydro-β-carotene**

1.4 g. of 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-diyne were dissolved in 100 ml. of absolute ether, and to the solution were added 20 ml. of N. ethereal phenyl-lithium solution. After refluxing the reaction mixture for 30 minutes a solution of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al in 100 ml. of absolute ether was added, and the reaction mixture was then boiled for one hour. After hydrolysing the reaction mixture with ammonium chloride solution, separating the ether layer, drying and concentrating, there was obtained 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-di-hydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-oxadecapentaen-5,13-di-yl in the form of a tough resin; absorption maxima in the ultra-violet spectrum at 266, 330 and 346 μ. The crude product was dehydrated in the manner described in Example 1 to obtain 3,4,3',4'-11',12',12'-tetradehydro-β-carotene; U.V. absorption maxima at 335, 382 and 403 μ. By partially hydrogenating and isomerizing this compound in the manner described in Example 1 there was obtained 3,4,3',4'-bis-dehydro-β-carotene of M.P. 190-191°C; ultra-violet spectrum with a broad absorption maximum at 471 μ.

**Example 3**

**Zeaxanthene**

0.8 g. of 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-diyne were dissolved in 50 ml. of absolute ether, and to the resulting solution there were added dropwise 10 ml. of N. ethereal phenyl-lithium solution. After boiling for one hour, a solution of 2.5 g. of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-actecoxy-cyclohexyldiene)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al in 50 ml. of absolute ether was added to the light-yellow suspension whereupon a thick white precipitate formed. After refluxing for one hour, the reaction mixture was hydrolyzed by means of ammonium acetate solution. The ether layer was separated, washed with water, dried over anhydrous calcium chloride, and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was a formy solid consisting of 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-actecoxy-cyclohexyldiene)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-di-hydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-oxadecapentaen-5,13-di-yl; yield: 3.4 g. This product was used for the next step without any preliminary purification. It was dissolved in 80 ml. of benzene, and 2 ml. of pyridine were added to the resulting solution. To the solution was added in a nitrogen atmosphere, while stirring, a mixture of 0.7 ml. of phosphorus oxychloride, 0.7 ml. of pyridine and 20 ml. of benzene. The reaction mixture was heated for 1 hour at 70-80°C and then poured into ice water. The separated benzen layer was washed neutral, washed and concentrated. The residue, i.e. 3,3'-di-acetoxy-11,12',11',12'-bis-dehydro-β-carotene, which consisted of a tough resin, was purified by chromatography on alumina by means of petroleum ether-benzene, and the purified product was saponified by heating in a 2% sodium hydroxide solution in ethereal sodium hydroxide. The resulting 3,3'-di-hydroxy-11,12',11',12'-bis-dehydro-β-carotene showed absorption maxima in the ultra-violet spectrum at 334 and 408 μ. The partial hydrogenation and the isomerisation were carried out in the manner described in Example 1. In the ultra-violet spectrum, the thus obtained synthetic zeaxanthene showed the same absorption maxima at 452 and 480 μ as β-carotene.

We claim:

1. A process which comprises condensing 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-diyne biaterially with a compound selected from the group consisting of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al, 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al and 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexyldiene)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al, wherein R represents a member selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy and lower alkanoxioy, in an inert solvent by means of a metal organic reaction, hydrolyzing the reaction product in aqueous solution to obtain, respectively, a dial of the group consisting of 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-1-yl) - 3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-di-hydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-oxadecapentaen-5,13-di-yl, 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-3-cyclohexen-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-di-hydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-oxadecapentaen-5,13-di-yl, and 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexenylidene)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al, wherein R has the same significance as above, treating said dial with acid whereupon two molecules of water are eliminated and allyl rearrangement simultaneously occurs, thereby producing respectively, a carotenoid selected from the group consisting of 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl) - 3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-di-hydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-oxadecapentaen-5,13-di-yl, 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexenylidene)-2-methyl-2-butien-1-al, wherein R has the same significance as above, and selectively catalytically hydrogenating the triple bonds in said named carotenoids to double bonds.

2. A process as in claim 1 wherein 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-diyne di-lithium derivative is used in said initial condensation.

3. A process as in claim 1 wherein 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-diyne di-sodium derivative is used in said initial condensation.

4. A process as in claim 1 wherein 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-diyne di-lithium derivative is used in said initial condensation.
9

A process as in claim 1 wherein 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-di-yne di-alkylammonium derivative is used in said initial condensation.

5 A process as in claim 1 wherein the end products are heated thereby isomerising di-cis carotened to all-trans carotenoid.

6 A process which comprises condensing 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-di-yne bilaterally with a compound selected from the group consisting of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl) -2 -methyl -2 -buten-1-yl, 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-yl and 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexyldiene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-yl, wherein R represents a member selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy and lower alkanoxy, in an inert solvent by means of a metal organic reaction, hydrolyzing the reaction product in aqueous solution to obtain, respectively, a dihydroxy diol of the group consisting of 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-dihydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-octadecapentaen-5,13-di-yne, 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-dihydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-octadecapentaen-5,13-di-yne wherein R represents the same significance as above, esterifying the two central hydroxy groups of said diol with a lower fatty acid, treating the resulting ester with acid wherein two molecules of acid are eliminated and allyl rearrangement simultaneously occurs, thereby producing, respectively, a carotenoid selected from the group consisting of 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-1,3,7,9,11,15,17-octadecaheptaen-5,13-di-yne, 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-1,3,7,9,11,15,17-octadecaheptaen-5,13-di-yne wherein R has the same significance as above, and selectively catalytically hydrogenating the triple bonds in said last named carotenoids to double bonds.

A process which comprises condensing a metal organic derivative of 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-di-yne in an inert solvent bilaterally with a compound selected from the group consisting of 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl) -2 -methyl -2 -buten-1 -1- al, 4 -(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-yl and 4-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexyldiene)-2-methyl-2-buten-1-yl, wherein R represents a member selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy and lower alkanoxy, and hydrolyzing the reaction product in aqueous solution to obtain, respectively, a diol of the group consisting of 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1,3-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-dihydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-octadecapentaen-5,13-di-yne, 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-4-R-1-cyclohexadien-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-dihydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-octadecapentaen-5,13-di-yne wherein R has the same significance as above.

A process which comprises condensing 3,8-dimethyl-3,5,7-decatrien-1,9-di-yne bilaterally with 4 -(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-2 -methyl -2-buten-1 -1- al in an inert solvent by means of a metal organic reaction, hydrolyzing the reaction product in aqueous solution to obtain 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-dihydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-octadecapentaen-5,13-di-yne, treating the last named compound with acid wherein two molecules of water are eliminated and allyl rearrangement simultaneously occurs, thereby producing 1,18-di-(2,6,6-trimethyl-1-cyclohexen-1-yl)-3,7,12,16-tetramethyl-4,15-dihydroxy-2,7,9,11,16-octadecapentaen-5,13-di-yne, selectively catalytically hydrogenating the triple bonds in the last named compound to double bonds to obtain di-cis-β-carotene and heating the di-cis-β-carotene to obtain all-trans-β-carotene.

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2,609,396 Inhoffen et al. September 2, 1952

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CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION DELETED
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§ 184.1240  Carbon dioxide.

(a) Carbon dioxide (empirical formula CO₂, CAS Reg. No. 124–38–9) occurs as a colorless, odorless, noncombustible gas at normal temperatures and pressures. The solid form, dry ice, sublimes under atmospheric pressure at a temperature of −78.5 °C. Carbon dioxide is prepared as a byproduct of the manufacture of lime during the “burning” of limestone, from the combustion of carbonaceous material, from fermentation processes, and from gases found in certain natural springs and wells.

(b) The ingredient must be of a purity suitable for its intended use.

(c) In accordance with §184.1(b)(1), the ingredient is used in food with no limitations other than current good manufacturing practice. The affirmation of this ingredient as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) as a direct human food ingredient is based upon the following current good manufacturing practice conditions of use:

(1) The ingredient is used as a leavening agent as defined in §170.3(o)(17) of this chapter; a processing aid as defined in §170.3(o)(24) of this chapter; and a propellant, aerating agent, and gas as defined in §170.3(o)(25) of this chapter.

(2) The ingredient is used in food at levels not to exceed current good manufacturing practice.

(d) Prior sanctions for this ingredient different from the uses established in this section do not exist or have been waived.

§ 184.1245  Beta-carotene.

(a) Beta-carotene (CAS Reg. No. 7235–40–7) has the molecular formula C₄₀H₅₆. It is synthesized by saponification of vitamin A acetate. The resulting alcohol is either reacted to form vitamin A Wittig reagent or oxidized to vitamin A.
Food and Drug Administration, HHS

§ 184.1250 Cellulase enzyme preparation derived from Trichoderma longibrachiatum.

(a) Cellulase enzyme preparation is derived from a nonpathogenic, nontoxicogenic strain of Trichoderma longibrachiatum (formerly T. reesei). The enzyme cellulasé catalyzes the endohydrolysis of 1,4-beta-glycosidic linkages in cellulose. It is obtained from the culture filtrate resulting from a pure culture fermentation process.

(b) The ingredient meets the general and additional requirements for enzyme preparations in the monograph specifications on enzyme preparations in the “Food Chemicals Codex,” 4th ed. (1996), pp. 129 to 134, which is incorporated by reference in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies are available from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Ave. NW., Box 285, Washington, DC 20055 (Internet http://www.nap.edu), or may be examined at the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition’s Library, 5100 Paint Branch Pkwy., College Park, MD 20740, or at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202–741–6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

(c) In accordance with §184.1(b)(1), the ingredient is used in food at levels not to exceed current good manufacturing practice. The ingredient is used in infant formula as a source of vitamin A and vitamin A aldehyde are reacted together to form beta-carotene.

(b) The ingredient meets the specifications of the Food Chemicals Codex, 3d Ed. (1981), p. 73, which is incorporated by reference. Copies are available from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20418, or available for inspection at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202–741–6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

(c) In accordance with §184.1(b)(1), the ingredient is used in food with no limitation other than current good manufacturing practice. The ingredient is used in infant formula as a source of vitamin A in accordance with section 412(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or with regulations promulgated under section 412(g) of the act. Prior sanctions for this ingredient different from the uses established in this section do not exist or have been waived.

[52 FR 25211, July 6, 1987]

§ 184.1257 Clove and its derivatives.

(a) Cloves are the dried unopened flower buds and calyx tubes, harvested before the flowers have opened, of the clove tree Eugenia caryophyllata Thunberg, native to tropical Asia. Their derivatives include essential oils (cloves, CAS Reg. No. 8000–34–8; buds; leaves, CAS Reg. No. 8015–97–2; stems, CAS Reg. No. 8015–98–3; and eugenol, CAS Reg. No. 97–53–0), oleoresins, and natural extractives obtained from clove buds, leaves, and stems.
ß-CAROTENES, synthetic


SYNONYMS
CI Food Orange 5, INS No. 160a(i); CI (1975) No. 40800

DEFINITION
These specifications apply to predominantly all trans (Z) isomer of ß-carotene together with minor amounts of other carotenoids; diluted and stabilized forms are prepared from ß-carotene meeting these specifications and include solutions or suspensions of ß-carotene in edible fats or oils, emulsions and water dispersible powders; these preparations may have different cis/trans isomer ratios; the analytical methods described for the parent colour are not necessarily suitable for the assay of or determination of impurities in the stabilized forms (appropriate methods should be available from the manufacturer).

C.A.S. number 7235-40-7

Chemical names ß-Carotene, ß,ß-carotene

Chemical formula C_{40}H_{56}

Formula weight 536.88

Assay Not less than 96% total colouring matters, expressed as ß-carotene

DESCRIPTION Red to brownish-red crystals or crystalline powder; sensitive to oxygen and light and should therefore be kept in a light-resistant container under inert gas

FUNCTIONAL USES Colour

CHARACTERISTICS

IDENTIFICATION

Solubility (Vol. 4) Insoluble in water; practically insoluble in ethanol; slightly soluble in vegetable oils; soluble in chloroform
Spectrophotometry

Determine the absorbance of the sample solution C (See Method of Assay) at 455 nm and 483 nm. The ratio $A_{455}/A_{483}$ is between 1.14 and 1.19. Determine the absorbance of the sample solution C at 455 nm and that of sample Solution B (See Method of Assay) at 340 nm. The ratio $A_{455}/A_{340}$ is not lower than 15.

Test for carotenoid

The colour of a solution of the sample in acetone disappears after successive additions of a 5% solution of sodium nitrite and 1 N sulfuric acid.

Carr-Price reaction

A solution of the sample in chloroform turns blue on addition of an excess of Carr-Price reagent TS.

PURITY

Sulfated ash (Vol. 4)

Not more than 0.1%
Test 2 g of the sample (Method I)

Subsidiary colouring matters

Carotenoids other than β-carotene: Not more than 3% of total colouring matters.
See description under TESTS

Lead (Vol. 4)

Not more than 2 mg/kg
Determine using an atomic absorption technique appropriate to the specified level. The selection of sample size and method of sample preparation may be based on the principles of the method described in Volume 4, “Instrumental Methods.”

TESTS

PURITY TESTS

Subsidiary colouring matters

Carotenoids other than β-carotene
Dissolve about 80 mg of sample in 100 ml chloroform. Apply 400 µl of this solution as a streak 2 cm from the bottom of a TLC-plate (Silicagel 0.25 mm). Immediately develop the chromatogram with a solvent mixture of 95 parts dichloromethane and 5 parts diethyl ether in a saturated chamber, suitably protected from light, until the solvent front has moved 15 cm above the initial streak. Remove the plate, allow the main part of the solvent to evaporate at room temperature and mark the principal band as well as the bands corresponding to other carotenoids. Remove the silicagel adsorbent that contains the principal band, transfer it to a glass-stoppered 100 ml centrifuge tube and add 40.0 ml chloroform (solution 1).

Remove the silicagel adsorbent that contains the combined bands corresponding to other carotenoids, transfer it to a glass-stoppered, 50 ml centrifuge tube and add 20.0 ml chloroform (solution 2).

Shake the centrifuge tubes by mechanical means for 10 min and centrifuge for 5 min. Dilute 10.0 ml of Solution 1 to 50.0 ml with chloroform (solution 3). Determine, with a suitable spectrophotometer, the absorbances of Solutions 2 and 3 in 1-cm cells at the wavelength maximum about 464 nm, using chloroform as blank.
Calculation
Calculate the percentage of carotenoids other than β-carotene (%) =

\[
\frac{A_2 \times 100}{10A_3 + A_2}
\]

where
A_2 = absorbance of Solution 2
A_3 = absorbance of Solution 3

**METHOD OF ASSAY**
Proceed as directed under *Total Content by Spectrophotometry* in Volume 4 using the following conditions:

W = 0.08 g
V_1 = V_2 = V_3 = 100 ml
v_1 = v_2 = 5 ml
A_1%_1 cm = 2500
λ_{max} = about 455 nm
### NUTRIENTS PER 100 CALORIES (5 FL OZ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>3.07 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>153 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>0.81 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>105 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium</td>
<td>90 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloride</td>
<td>65 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>90 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iodine</td>
<td>6 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selenium</td>
<td>1.8 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>24 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium</td>
<td>105 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloride</td>
<td>65 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>530 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D</td>
<td>60 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin E</td>
<td>1.5 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin K</td>
<td>8 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiamin (B1)</td>
<td>0.25 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riboflavin (B2)</td>
<td>150 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niacin</td>
<td>1050 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folic Acid (Folacin)</td>
<td>15 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantothenic Acid</td>
<td>450 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biotin</td>
<td>16 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
<td>9 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choline</td>
<td>16 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inositol</td>
<td>4.7 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>16 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus</td>
<td>105 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>1.8 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>90 mcg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Directions for Preparation and Use

1. Open foil, remove protectors, and invert cap; press down to pierce foil, then turn cap a half turn before each use.
2. Pour formula into 1 Quart (946 mL) bottle.
3. Shake very well.
4. For 1 Quart (946 mL) bottle, add 1 Quart (946 mL) water.
5. Use as directed by your baby's doctor.

**Do Not Use If Band Around Cap Or Inner Foil Seal Is Damaged.**

Your baby’s health depends on carefully following these directions. Failure to follow these directions could result in severe harm. Ask your baby’s doctor if you need to boil (sterilize) bottles, nipples and rings before use.

**Use by Date on Bottle**

**Do Not Add Water**

**Do Not Use If Band Around Cap Or Inner Foil Seal Is Damaged.**

Your baby’s health depends on carefully following these directions. Failure to follow these directions could result in severe harm. Ask your baby’s doctor if you need to boil (sterilize) bottles, nipples and rings before use.

**Warning**

Do not feed any formula or water from a bottle or cup that has been left out for more than 1 hour. Discard and start over after 1 hour from last feeding.

**Storage**

Closed opened, shelf-pack bottle in refrigerator. Store prepared bottle in refrigerator and feed to baby within 48 hours.

Store unopened formulas at room temperature, avoid extreme temperatures. Do not reuse container.
Powdered infant formulas are not sterile and should not be fed to premature infants or infants who might have immune problems unless directed and supervised by your baby's doctor. Your baby's health depends on carefully following these directions. Proper hygiene, handling, and storage are important for mixing and if you need to boil (sterilize) bottles, nipples and rings before use. Wash your hands, surfaces and utensils before opening the container. Use opened container contents within 1 month. Once mixed, store bottles in refrigerator and use within 1 hour or discard. Do not reuse container.

Directions for Preparation and Use

Milk-based powder

Wash bottle; shake well; attach nipple

Add 1 (8.6 g) to each 2 fl oz of water

Return dry scoop to holder in lid

Pour water into clean mixing bottle (see mixing guide)

Gently shake mixture to form a homogeneous mix

Wash your hands, surfaces and utensils before opening container. Use opened container contents within 1 month. Once mixed, store bottles in refrigerator and use within 1 hour or discard. Do not reuse container.

Serious burns can result. Ask your baby’s doctor if you need to use cooled, boiled water for mixing and if you need to boil (sterilize) bottles, nipples and rings before use.

Ingredients: Organic milk, organic soy oil, less than 2% of: organic coconut oil, organic sunflower oil, organic oleic sunflower oil, organic canola oil, organic organic C. cohnii oil*, organic M. alpina oil†, beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene, fructooligosaccharides, potassium citrate, calcium carbonate, ascorbic acid, soy lecithin, ascorbyl palmitate, ferrous sulfate, salt, choline chloride, choline bitartrate, cupric sulfate, zinc sulfate, manganese sulfate, potassium hydroxide and includes (contains milk and soy ingredients.)

Contains rose and sunflower ingredients.

*Source of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)
†Source of arachidonic acid (ARA)

NUTRIENTS PER 100 CALORIES (5 FL OZ, PREPARED AS DIRECTED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTRIENT</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>2.07 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>5.63 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbohydrate</td>
<td>10.4 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>133 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licorice Acid</td>
<td>880 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VITAMINS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VITAMIN</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>3000 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D</td>
<td>600 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin E</td>
<td>1.5 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin K</td>
<td>8 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiamin (B1)</td>
<td>0.8 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riboflavin (B2)</td>
<td>1.5 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niacin (B3)</td>
<td>1050 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folic Acid (B9)</td>
<td>150 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biotin (B7)</td>
<td>0.25 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin B12</td>
<td>0.25 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantothenic Acid</td>
<td>9 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choline</td>
<td>16 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inositol</td>
<td>4.7 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>0.75 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iodine</td>
<td>55 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>78 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>24 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
<td>1.9 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>2 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus</td>
<td>1.5 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>2 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MINERALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINERAL</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>0.31 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>0.3 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>103 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus</td>
<td>82 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similac Advance Organic Complete Nutrition

For Your Baby’s 1st Year

Use By Date on Container: Use as directed by a doctor

Directions for Preparation and Use

Your baby’s health depends on carefully following these directions. Proper hygiene, handling, and storage are important when preparing infant formula. Failure to follow these directions could result in severe harm. Ask your baby’s doctor if you need to use cooled, boiled water for mixing and if you need to boil (sterilize) bottles, nipples and rings before use.

Pour water into clean mixing bottle (see mixing guide)

Gently shake mixture to form a homogeneous mix

Wash your hands, surfaces and utensils before opening container. Use opened container contents within 1 month. Once mixed, store bottles in refrigerator and use within 1 hour or discard. Do not reuse container.

Serious burns can result. Ask your baby’s doctor if you need to use cooled, boiled water for mixing and if you need to boil (sterilize) bottles, nipples and rings before use.

Ingredients: Organic milk, organic soy oil, less than 2% of: organic coconut oil, organic sunflower oil, organic oleic sunflower oil, organic canola oil, organic organic C. cohnii oil*, organic M. alpina oil†, beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene, fructooligosaccharides, potassium citrate, calcium carbonate, ascorbic acid, soy lecithin, ascorbyl palmitate, ferrous sulfate, salt, choline chloride, choline bitartrate, cupric sulfate, zinc sulfate, manganese sulfate, potassium hydroxide and includes (contains milk and soy ingredients.)

Contains rose and sunflower ingredients.

*Source of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)
†Source of arachidonic acid (ARA)

Net Wt. 1.45 lb (658 g)

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Your baby's health depends on carefully following these preparation, use, and storage instructions; changes could affect your baby's nutrition and safety. Before preparing the infant formula, make sure to always wash your hands. Clean can top before opening. Ask your baby's doctor about the need to boil or sterilize water for formula and the proper preparation of bottle and feeding utensils.

Storage: Store unopened formula in unopened, airtight plastic container in cool, dry place. Once bottle is opened, store food in refrigerator and use within 24 hours after opening. Discard remaining formula in bottle after three days after start of feeding.

Use the feeding chart for proper amount of water and powder to make water. Powdered formula contains a blend of organic and non-organic ingredients. Always add powder to water. For best results, follow directions carefully. Vermont Organics^Tm organic infant formula is a wholesome choice for your baby.

Made in the heart of the Green Mountains, Vermont Organics™ ORGANIC infant formula meets all USDA organic certification requirements. In addition to containing sources of organic fats, proteins, and carbohydrates, Vermont Organics™ ORGANIC pediatric formula is produced without the use of antibiotics, added growth hormones or potentially harmful pesticides.

Breast milk is best. But if you decide to supplement breastfeeding with formula, Vermont Organics™ ORGANIC infant formula is the wholesome choice for your baby.
1. Substance/preparation and company identification

Company
BASF CORPORATION
100 Campus Drive
Florham Park, NJ 07932

24 Hour Emergency Response Information
CHEMTREC: 1-800-424-9300
BASF HOTLINE: 1-800-832-HELP

Synonyms:
Suspension of beta-Carotene in Corn Oil; 30041157

2. Composition/information on ingredients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAS Number</th>
<th>Content (W/W)</th>
<th>Chemical name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8001-30-7</td>
<td>60.0 - 80.0 %</td>
<td>Corn oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7235-40-7</td>
<td>20.0 - 40.0 %</td>
<td>beta-Carotene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10191-41-0</td>
<td>0.5 - 1.5 %</td>
<td>D,L-alpha-Tocopherol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Hazard identification

Emergency overview
CAUTION: MAY CAUSE EYE, SKIN AND RESPIRATORY TRACT IRRITATION.
INGESTION MAY CAUSE GASTRIC DISTURBANCES.
Avoid contact with the skin, eyes and clothing.
Avoid inhalation of mists/vapours.
Use with local exhaust ventilation.
Wear a NIOSH-certified (or equivalent) organic vapour/particulate respirator.
Wear NIOSH-certified chemical goggles.
Wear chemical resistant protective gloves.
Wear protective clothing.
Eye wash fountains and safety showers must be easily accessible.

Potential health effects

Primary routes of exposure
Routes of entry for solids and liquids include eye and skin contact, ingestion and inhalation. Routes of entry for gases include inhalation and eye contact. Skin contact may be a route of entry for liquified gases.

Acute toxicity:
Ingestion may cause gastrointestinal disturbances. Information on: beta-Carotene
Virtually nontoxic after a single ingestion.

Irritation:
Irritating to respiratory system. Irritating to eyes and skin.
4. First-aid measures

**General advice:**
Remove contaminated clothing.

**If inhaled:**
Keep patient calm, remove to fresh air.

**If on skin:**
Wash thoroughly with soap and water.

**If in eyes:**
Wash affected eyes for at least 15 minutes under running water with eyelids held open.

If irritation develops, seek immediate medical attention.

**If swallowed:**
Rinse mouth and then drink plenty of water.

Seek medical attention.

5. Fire-fighting measures

**Flash point:** 147 °C
**Autoignition:** 330 °C

**Suitable extinguishing media:**
water fog, foam, dry extinguishing media

**Hazards during fire-fighting:**
No particular hazards known.

**Protective equipment for fire-fighting:**
Firefighters should be equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus and turn-out gear.

**Further information:**
Dispose of fire debris and contaminated extinguishing water in accordance with official regulations.

**NFPA Hazard codes:**
Health: 1  Fire: 1  Reactivity: 0  Special:

6. Accidental release measures

**Personal precautions:**
No special precautions necessary.

**Environmental precautions:**
Do not discharge into drains/surface waters/groundwater.
7. Handling and storage

Handling

**General advice:**
Mix thoroughly before use.

**Protection against fire and explosion:**
Risk of self-ignition when a large surface area is produced due to fine dispersion. Prevent electrostatic charge - sources of ignition should be kept well clear - fire extinguishers should be kept handy.

Storage

**General advice:**
Keep container tightly closed and dry; store in a cool place. Protect from the effects of light. Keep under inert gas.
Store at ambient temperature. Keep container tightly closed. Store in a light-impervious container.

**Temperature tolerance**
Protect from temperatures above: 50 °C
The packed product must be protected against exceeding the indicated temperature.

8. Exposure controls and personal protection

**Advice on system design:**
Provide local exhaust ventilation to control vapours/mists.

**Personal protective equipment**

**Respiratory protection:**
Wear a NIOSH-certified (or equivalent) organic vapour/particulate respirator.

**Hand protection:**
Wear chemical resistant protective gloves., Consult with glove manufacturer for testing data.

**Eye protection:**
Tightly fitting safety goggles (chemical goggles).

**Body protection:**
Body protection must be chosen based on level of activity and exposure.

**General safety and hygiene measures:**
Handle in accordance with good industrial hygiene and safety practice. Wash soiled clothing immediately.

9. Physical and chemical properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>oily, dispersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odour</td>
<td>odourless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidification temperature</td>
<td>-6 °C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vapour pressure</td>
<td>&lt; 0.00001 hPa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>approx. 0.935 g/cm³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viscosity, dynamic</td>
<td>354 mPa.s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solubility in water</td>
<td>sparingly soluble</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Stability and reactivity
Conditions to avoid:

Substances to avoid:
No substances known that should be avoided.

Hazardous reactions:
No hazardous reactions if stored and handled as prescribed/indicated.

Decomposition products:
Hazardous decomposition products: No hazardous decomposition products if stored and handled as prescribed/indicated.

Thermal decomposition:
200 - 230 °C

Corrosion to metals:
No corrosive effect on metal.

11. Toxicological information

Oral:

Information on: beta-Carotene
LD50/rat: > 5,000 mg/kg (BASF-Test)

Skin irritation:

Information on: beta-Carotene
rabbit: non-irritant (BASF-Test)

Eye irritation:

Information on: beta-Carotene
rabbit: non-irritant (OECD Guideline 405)

Genetic toxicity:

Information on: beta-Carotene
Results from a number of mutagenicity studies with microorganisms, mammalian cell culture and mammals are available. Taking into account all of the information, there is no indication that the substance is mutagenic.

Reproductive toxicity:

Information on: beta-Carotene
The results of animal studies gave no indication of a fertility impairing effect.

Developmental toxicity/teratogenicity:

Information on: beta-Carotene
No indications of a developmental toxic / teratogenic effect were seen in animal studies.
12. Ecological information

Information on: beta-Carotene
No data available concerning bioaccumulation.

Information on: beta-Carotene
Acute and prolonged toxicity to fish:
DIN 38412 Part 15 static
golden orfe/LC50 (96 h): > 10,000 mg/l
Tested above maximum solubility. The details of the toxic effect relate to the nominal concentration.

----------------------------------
Information on: beta-Carotene
Toxicity to microorganisms:
DIN 38412 Part 27 (draft) static
bacterium/EC50 (0.5 h): > 10,000 mg/l
The product has low solubility in the test medium. An aqueous solution prepared with solubilizers has been tested. The details of the toxic effect relate to the nominal concentration.

----------------------------------

13. Disposal considerations

Waste disposal of substance:
Dispose of in accordance with national, state and local regulations.

Container disposal:
Dispose of in a licensed facility. Recommend crushing, puncturing or other means to prevent unauthorized use of used containers.

14. Transport information

Land transport
USDOT
Not classified as a dangerous good under transport regulations

Sea transport
IMDG
Not classified as a dangerous good under transport regulations

Air transport
IATA/ICAO
Not classified as a dangerous good under transport regulations

15. Regulatory information

Federal Regulations
Registration status:
Safety data sheet
Lucarotin® 30 M
Revision date: 2006/05/08
Version: 1.0

TSCA, US released / listed
OSHA hazard category: Not hazardous
SARA hazard categories (EPCRA 311/312): Not hazardous

State regulations
State RTK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAS Number</th>
<th>Chemical name</th>
<th>State RTK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8001-30-7</td>
<td>Corn oil</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Other information

HMIS III rating
Health: 1 Flammability: 1 Physical hazard: 0

HMIS uses a numbering scale ranging from 0 to 4 to indicate the degree of hazard. A value of zero means that the substance possesses essentially no hazard; a rating of four indicates high hazard.

Local contact information
prod_reg@basf.com

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END OF DATA SHEET
Chemical names of active ingredients
Beta-carotene, provitamin A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRD-No.s.</th>
<th>Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30041157*</td>
<td>Lucarotin 30 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50082735 4 x 5 kg aluminium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30085626*</td>
<td>Lucarotin 30 SUN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51988215 4 x 5 kg aluminium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The product is kosher.

Country of origin
Germany

Description
Brick-red, oily dispersions with a neutral flavor containing beta-carotene in microcrystalline form in vegetable oils.

Composition
Lucarotin 30 M  corn oil
Lucarotin 30 SUN  sunflower oil

Specifications
Assay
Lucarotin 30 M  min. 30%
Lucarotin 30 SUN  min. 30%


Monographs
The included active ingredient complies with the current “Betacarotene” Ph. Eur. and “β-Carotene” FCC monograph as well as the purity requirements of Directive 2008/128/EC (E 160 a).

C_{40}H_{56}  Molar mass 536.9 g/mol

Regulations
Beta-carotene is approved for use as a food colorant and as provitamin A source in most countries. However, specific regulations on the ingredients used in the respective countries and for the intended use have to be observed.

Stability
The Lucarotin dispersions do not contain a stabilizer. Stored in the unopened original packaging at room temperature (max. 25 °C), the products are stable for at least 36 months. As beta-carotene may sink to the bottom of the container, the dispersions should always be stirred prior to use.

Storage/Handling
The products are sensitive to atmospheric oxygen, light, heat and moisture. Lucarotin dispersions should therefore be stored under nitrogen in the tightly sealed, light-proof packaging in a cool place. Once opened, it is recommended to use the remaining contents as quickly as possible.

Applications
Dietary supplements:
The Lucarotin dispersions are used in soft capsules as provitamin A, as an active ingredient and as a colorant.

Food products:
Used as both yellow-orange colorant and provitamin A. Even at low concentrations, beta-carotene dispersions have a high tintorial strength. They are suitable for coloring as well as for standardizing the color of oils, fats, margarine, butter, processed...
cheese, cheese spreads, milk replacement products, ice cream, soups, sauces, fillings of baked goods and egg products. They are added to the oily phase.

**Important: Beta-carotene dispersions should be stirred briefly prior to use.**

The Lucarotin dispersions are usually processed as stock solution in a suitable quantity of oil, prepared by careful heating to 40 °C. This stock solution is then added to the food product.

The table below provides approximate of 100% beta-carotene, which are added to 1 kg of various food products. The quantity is dependent on the desired shade and should be determined in small scale tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Approximate Concentration (mg/kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>14 – 16 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream fillings</td>
<td>1 – 10 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg products</td>
<td>2 – 5 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats, oils</td>
<td>7 – 10 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement products</td>
<td>2 – 5 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on vegetables oils</td>
<td>1 – 2 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese preparations</td>
<td>6 – 12 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margarine</td>
<td>3 – 9 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad dressings</td>
<td>10 – 25 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processed cheese</td>
<td>4 – 20 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauces</td>
<td>2 – 6 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice cream</td>
<td>0.2 – 1 mg/kg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The Lucarotin dry powders can also be used to color these food products.

- **Butter:**
  the stock solution is heated to 45 °C and added to the cream

- **Pasta products containing egg:**
  a stock solution containing about 0.5% beta-carotene in oil is evenly mixed with a defined quantity of flour; the colored premix is added to the flour prior to production

- **Imitation cheese:**
  the beta-carotene stock solution in vegetable oil is heated to 50 – 60 °C and added during production

- **Margarine:**
  the beta-carotene dispersion is completely dissolved in the oily phase prior to emulsification

- **Salad dressings:**
  the vegetable oil is heated to 45 – 50 °C before adding the beta-carotene dispersion

- **Processed cheese:**
  a beta-carotene stock solution is prepared in melted butter and added to the cheese mixture prior to the melting process

- **Ice cream:**
  the required quantity of beta-carotene is stirred into fat or oil until it is completely dissolved; the temperature of the oil should be at least 20 °C, preferably 37 – 50 °C

- **Soups:**
  the oil for the soup is heated and the beta-carotene dispersion dissolved in it

**Note**

The Lucarotin Dispersions must be handled in accordance with the Safety Data Sheet.

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November 2009
CERTIFICATE

DQS GmbH
Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Zertifizierung von Managementsystemen

hereby certifies that the company

BASF SE
Operating Division Care Chemicals
67056 Ludwigshafen
Germany

has implemented and maintains an Environmental Management System.

Scope:
Development, manufacturing and marketing of ingredients and additives for food and feed, cosmetic ingredients, aroma chemicals, superabsorbents and performance chemicals for detergents and formulators

Through an audit, documented in a report, it was verified that the management system fulfills the requirements of the following standard:

ISO 14001 : 2004

Certificate registration no. 467055 UM
Excerpt from Certificate Registration No. 019089 UM
Date of certification 2009-12-02
Valid until 2012-12-01

Michael Drechsel
Managing Director

Jan Böge
Managing Director

August-Schanz-Straße 21, 60433 Frankfurt am Main
Annex to Certificate
Registration No. 467055 UM

BASF SE
Operating Division Care Chemicals
67056 Ludwigshafen
Germany

Location | Scope
---|---
092373 | Development, manufacturing and marketing of superabsorbents
BASF SE
Global Business Unit
Global Hygiene, Home & Personal Care Businesses
67056 Ludwigshafen
Germany

002854 | Development, manufacturing and marketing of ingredients and additives for food and feed
BASF SE
Global Business Unit
Nutrition Ingredients
67056 Ludwigshafen
Germany

467339 | Manufacturing and marketing of Aroma Chemicals
BASF SE
Global Business Unit
Citral & Aroma Chemicals
67056 Ludwigshafen
Germany

467054 | Development, manufacturing and marketing of cosmetic ingredients and performance chemicals for detergents and formulators
BASF SE
Regional Business Unit
Care Chemicals and Formulators Europe
67056 Ludwigshafen
Germany

This annex (edition: 2009-12-02) is only valid in connection with the above-mentioned certificate.
determine the absorbance values of the Sample solutions at the potassium emission line at 766.7 nm. Plot the absorbance values of the Sample solutions versus their contents of potassium, in μg/mL; draw the straight line best fitting the three points and extrapolate the line until it intersects with the concentration axis. From the intercept, determine the amount, in μg, of potassium in each mL of Sample solution A. Calculate the percent potassium in the portion of Sample taken by multiplying the concentration, in μg/mL, of potassium found in Sample solution A by 0.2.

Acceptance criteria: NMT 0.2%

### SODIUM

[NOTE—The Standard solution and the Sample solutions may be modified, if necessary, to obtain solutions of suitable concentrations adaptable to the linear or working range of the spectrophotometer.]

**Standard stock solution:** 10.0 mg/mL sodium, made by transferring 6.355 g of sodium chloride, previously dried at 105°C for 2 h, into a 250-mL volumetric flask, dilute to volume with water, and mix.

**Standard solution:** 250 μg/mL sodium: from Standard stock solution

**Sample:** 4 g

**Sample stock solution:** Transfer the Sample into a 100-mL volumetric flask, dissolve in and dilute to volume with water, and mix.

**Sample solutions:** Add 0, 2.0, and 4.0 mL of the Standard solution to three separate 25-mL volumetric flasks. Add 20.0 mL of the Sample stock solution to each flask, dilute to volume with water, and mix. These solutions contain 0 (Sample solution A), 20.0 (Sample solution B), and 40.0 (Sample solution C) μg/mL of sodium.

**Analysis:** Using a suitable atomic absorption spectrophotometer equipped with an air-acetylene flame and using water as the blank, concomitantly determine the absorbance values of the Sample solutions at the sodium emission line at 589.0 nm. Plot the absorbance values of the Sample solutions versus their contents of sodium, in μg/mL; draw the straight line best fitting the three points and extrapolate the line until it intersects with the concentration axis. From the intercept, determine the amount, in μg, of sodium in each mL of Sample solution A. Calculate the percent sodium in the portion of Sample taken by multiplying the concentration, in μg/mL, of sodium found in Sample solution A by 0.003125.

Acceptance criteria: NMT 0.1%

### SPECIFIC TESTS

- **Optical (Specific) Rotation**, Appendix IIB
  
  **Sample solution:** 100 mg/mL (using a previously dried sample)

  Acceptance criteria: [α]D20 between −29.0° and −32.0°, calculated on the anhydrous basis

- **pH**, pH Determination, Appendix IIB
  
  **Sample solution:** 50 mg/mL

  Acceptance criteria: Between 5.5 and 9.5

- **Residue on Ignition (Sulfated Ash)**, Appendix IIC
  
  **Sample:** 2 g

  Acceptance criteria: NMT 0.5%

- **Water**, Water Determination, Appendix IIB

  Acceptance criteria: NMT 4.0%

### ß-Carotene

**First Published:** Prior to FCC 6

Carotene

\[ \text{C}_{40}\text{H}_{56} \quad \text{Formula wt 536.88} \]

INS: 160a(ii)  \hspace{1cm} CAS: [7235-40-7]

**DESCRIPTION**

ß-Carotene occurs as red crystals or as crystalline powder. It is insoluble in water and in acids and alkalies, but is soluble in carbon disulfide and in chloroform. It is sparingly soluble in ether, in solvent hexane, and in vegetable oils, and is practically insoluble in methanol and in ethanol. It melts between 176° and 182°, with decomposition.

**Function:** Nutrient; color

**Packaging and Storage:** Store in a cool place in tight, light-resistant containers under inert gas.

[NOTE—Carry out all work in low-actinic glassware and in subdued light]

**IDENTIFICATION**

- **Visible Absorption Spectrum**

  **Sample solution:** Use Sample solution B prepared for the Assay (below).

  **Analysis:** Using a suitable spectrophotometer, determine the absorbance of Sample solution B at 455 nm and at 483 nm.

  Acceptance criteria: The ratio of absorbance values obtained, \( A_{455}/A_{483} \), is between 1.14 and 1.18.

- **Visible Absorption Spectrum**

  **Sample solutions:** Use Sample solution A and Sample solution B prepared for the Assay (below).

  **Analysis:** Using a suitable spectrophotometer, determine the absorbance of Sample solution B at 455 nm and that of Sample solution A at 340 nm.

  Acceptance criteria: The ratio of absorbance values obtained, \( A_{455}/A_{340} \), is NLT 1.5.

**ASSAY**

- **Procedure**

  **Sample stock solution:** Transfer 50 mg of sample into a 100-mL volumetric flask, dissolve it in 10 mL of acid-free chloroform, immediately dilute to volume with cyclohexane, and mix.
Sample solution A: 5 mL of Sample stock solution diluted to 100 mL with cyclohexane
Sample solution B: 5 mL of Sample solution A diluted to 50 mL with cyclohexane
Analysis: Determine the absorbance of Sample solution B using a suitable atomic absorption spectrophotometer with a 1-cm cell, set to the wavelength of maximum absorption at about 455 nm, using cyclohexane as the blank. Calculate the quantity, in mg, of \( C_{06}H_{46} \) in the sample taken by the formula:

\[
\text{Result} = \frac{20,000 \text{ A}}{250}
\]

\( A \) = absorbance of the solution
\( 250 \) = absorbivity of pure \( \beta \)-carotene
Acceptance criteria: NLT 96.0% and NMT 101.0% of \( C_{06}H_{46} \) calculated on the dried basis

IMPURITIES
Inorganic Impurities
• LEAD, Lead Limit Test, Flame Atomic Absorption
  Spectrophotometric Method, Appendix IIB
  Sample: 5 g
  Acceptance criteria: NMT 0.2% by atomic absorption spectrophotometry

SPECIFIC TESTS
• LOSS ON DRYING, Appendix IIC: In a vacuum over phosphorus pentoxide at 40° for 4 h
  Acceptance criteria: NMT 0.2%
• RESidue ON IGNITION (SULFATED ASH), Appendix IIC
  Sample: 2 g
  Acceptance criteria: NMT 0.2%

Carrageenan
First Published: First Supplement, FCC 6

Irish moss (from Chondrus spp.)
Eucheuman (from Eucheuma spp.)
Iridophycan (from Iridaea spp.)
Hypnean (from Hypnea spp.)
Processed Eucheuma Seaweed, PES, PNG-carrageenan, and
Semi-refined carrageenan (from E. spinosum or E. cottonii)

INS: 407  CAS: [9000-07-1]

DESCRIPTION
Carrageenan occurs as a yellow or tan to white, coarse to
fine powder. It is obtained from certain members of the
class Rhodophyceae (red seaweeds). The principal
commercial sources of carrageenans are the following
families and genera of the class Rhodophyceae1:
  Furcellariaceae such as Furcellaria;
  Gigartinaceae such as Chondrus, Gigartina, Iridaea;
  Hypnaceae such as Hypnea;
  Phyllophoraceae such as Phyllophora, Gymnogongrus, Ahnfeltia;
  Solieriacae such as Eucheuma, Anatheca, Meristotheca.

Carrageenan is a hydrocolloid consisting mainly of the
ammonium, calcium, magnesium, potassium, and sodium
sulfate esters of galactose and 3,6-anhydrogalactose
polysaccharides. These hexoses are alternately linked \( \alpha-(1 \rightarrow 3) \) and \( \beta-(1 \rightarrow 4) \) in the copolymer. The relative
proportions of cations existing in carrageenan may be
changed during processing to the extent that one may
become predominant.

The prevalent polysaccharides in carrageenan are designated
as kappa-, iota-, and lambda-carrageenan. Kappa-
carrageenan is mostly the alternating polymer of D-
galactose-4-sulfate and 3,6-anhydro-D-galactose; iota-
carrageenan is similar except that the 3,6-anhydrogalactose
is sulfated at carbon 2. Between kappa-carrageenan and
iota-carrageenan, there is a continuum of intermediate
compositions differing in degree of sulfation at carbon 2.
In lambda-carrageenan, the alternating monomeric units
are mostly D-galactose-2-sulfate (1 \rightarrow 3-linked) and D-
galactose-2,6-disulfate (1 \rightarrow 4-linked).

Carrageenan may be obtained from any of the cited
seaweeds by extraction into water or aqueous dilute alkali.
It may be recovered by alcohol precipitation, by drum
drying, or by precipitation in aqueous potassium chloride
and subsequent freezing. Additionally, carrageenan may be
obtained by extracting the cleaned seaweed with alkali for
a short time at elevated temperatures. The material is then
thoroughly washed with water to remove residual salts
followed by purification, drying and milling to a powder.
Carrageenan obtained by this method contains a higher
percentage of algal cellulose. The alcohols used during
recovery and purification of carrageenan are restricted to
methanol, ethanol, and isopropanol.

Carrageenan is insoluble in ethanol but it is soluble in water
at 80°, forming a viscous clear or cloudy and slightly
opalaceous solution that flows readily. Some samples form
a cloudy viscous suspension in water. Carrageenan
disperses in water more readily if first moistened with
alcohol, glycerol, or a saturated solution of glucose or
sucrose in water.

Articles of commerce may include sugars for standardization
purposes, salts to obtain specific gelling or thickening
characteristics, or emulsifiers carried over from drum-drying
processes.

Function: Thickener, gelling agent, stabilizer, emulsifier

Packaging and Storage: Store in well-closed containers.

NOTE—Carrageenan must be well dispersed in water in
many of the following tests so dispersion technique must
be kept in mind throughout this monograph. Carrageenan
is best dispersed by slowly sprinkling the powder into cold
water with continuous vigorous stirring. This allows the
carrageenan particles to wet and hydrate effectively prior
to dissolving. Adding carrageenan directly to hot water, or
too rapidly to cold water, or not stirring vigorously will
cause the carrageenan particles to form lumps which are
very difficult to break down and solubilize. If appropriate,
carrageenan dispenses more readily in cold water if first

1In the United States, only the following seaweed species from the families
Gigartinaceae and Solieriacae are authorized as sources of carrageenan
intended for use in foods (Title 21 US Code of Federal Regulations Part 172,
section 620 (21 CFR 172.620)): Chondrus crispus, C. ocellatus, Eucheuma
cottonii, E. spinosum, Gigartina acicularis, G. pistillata, G. radula, and G.
stellata.
Human Health Effects:

**Human Toxicity Excerpts:**
/SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS/ Two large studies have found an increased incidence in lung cancers when beta-carotene supplements were given to individuals with a history of smoking and/or asbestos exposure. One study of 29,000 males with a history of smoking found an 18% increase in the incidence of lung cancer in the group receiving 20 mg of beta-carotene a day for 5 to 8 years as compared with those receiving placebo. Another study of 18,000 individuals found 28% more lung cancers in individuals with a history of smoking and/or asbestos exposure who took 30 mg of beta-carotene in addition to 25,000 Units of retinol a day for 4 years as compared with those receiving placebo. However, one study of 22,000 male physicians, some of them smokers and former smokers, found no increased risk of lung cancer at doses of 50 mg of beta-carotene every other day for 12 years.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

/EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDIES/ Epidemiological studies have suggested a protective effect of vegetables and fruits on urinary tract cancer but the possible protective nutrients are unknown. We studied the effect of alpha-tocopherol (a form of vitamin E) and beta-carotene supplementation on urinary tract cancer in the Alpha-Tocopherol, Beta-Carotene Cancer Prevention (ATBC) Study. A total of 29,133 male smokers aged 50-69 years from southwestern Finland were randomly assigned to receive alpha-tocopherol (50 mg), beta-carotene (20 mg), both agents, or a placebo daily for 5-8 years (median 6.1 years). Incident urothelial cancers (bladder, ureter, and renal pelvis; n = 169) and renal cell cancers (n = 102) were identified through the nationwide cancer registry. The diagnoses were centrally confirmed by review of medical records and pathology specimens. The supplementation effects were estimated using a proportional hazards model. Neither alpha-tocopherol nor beta-carotene affected the incidence of urothelial cancer, relative risk 1.1 (95% confidence interval (CI) 0.8-1.5) and 1.0 (95% CI 0.7-1.6), respectively, or the incidence of renal cell cancer, relative risk 1.1 (95% CI 0.7-1.6) and 0.8 (95% CI 0.6-1.3), respectively. Long-term supplementation with alpha-tocopherol and beta-carotene has no preventive effect on urinary tract cancers in middle-aged male smokers.

The Beta-Carotene and Retinol Efficacy Trial (CARET) was terminated 21 months ahead of schedule due to an excess of lung cancers. Deaths from cardiovascular disease also increased (relative risk=1.26 (95% confidence interval (CI) 0.99-1.61)) in the group assigned to a combination of 30 mg beta-carotene and 25 000 IU retinyl palmitate (vitamin A) daily. The basis for increased cardiovascular mortality is unexplained. 

Data on serum lipids, available for 1474 CARET Vanguard participants who were enrolled in the two CARET pilot studies and transitioned to the Vanguard study /were analyzed/. Total cholesterol and triglycerides were measured 2 months prior to, 4 and 12 months following randomization, and annually thereafter for up to 7 y. In the asbestos-exposed pilot (N = 816), participants were assigned to beta-carotene and retinol or to placebo; in the smokers pilot (N = 1029), participants were assigned to beta-carotene, retinol, a combination, or placebo. Serum cholesterol showed a decline over time in both arms; serum triglycerides had a continuous decline over time in the placebo arm, but an initial increase that persisted in the active arm. Both serum cholesterol concentrations (P < 0.0003) and serum triglycerides (P < 0.0001) were significantly higher in the participants receiving vitamin A and/or a combination of vitamin A and beta-carotene (n = 863) as compared to the placebo group (n = 611). Those in this active intervention group had an average cholesterol concentration 5.3 mg/dl (0.137 mmol/l) higher than those in the placebo arm. /It was concluded/ the differences in cholesterol and triglyceride concentrations between the groups following randomization may account in part for the unexpected excess in cardiovascular deaths seen in the active intervention arm of CARET. 

The Physicians' Health Study (PHS) was a randomized trial of beta-carotene (50 mg, alternate days) and aspirin in primary prevention of cancer and cardiovascular disease among 22,071 US male physicians. This report updates results for beta-carotene and examines effect modification by baseline characteristics. Beta-carotene's effect on cancer over nearly 13 years was examined overall and within subgroups defined by baseline characteristics using proportional-hazards models. 2667 incident cancers were confirmed, with 1117 prostate, 267 colon, and 178 lung cancers. There were no significant differences with supplementation in total (relative risk (RR) = 1.0, 95% confidence interval (CI) = 0.9-1.0); prostate (RR = 1.0, 95% CI = 0.9-1.1); colon (RR = 0.9, 95% CI = 0.7-1.2); or lung (RR = 0.9, 95% CI = 0.7-1.2) cancer, and no differences over time. In subgroup analyses, total cancer was modestly reduced with supplementation among those aged 70+ years (RR = 0.8, 95% CI = 0.7-1.0), daily drinkers of alcohol (RR = 0.9, 95% CI = 0.8-1.0), and those in the highest BMI quartile (RR = 0.9, 95% CI = 0.7-1.0). Prostate cancer was reduced with supplementation among those in the highest BMI quartile (RR = 0.8, 95% CI = 0.6-1.0), and colon cancer was reduced among daily drinkers of alcohol (RR = 0.5, 95% CI = 0.3-0.8). The PHS found no overall effect of beta-carotene on total cancer, or the three most common site-specific cancers. The possibility of risk reduction within specific subgroups remains.

Antioxidants may retard atherogenesis and limit inflammatory processes involved in aneurysm formation. We evaluated effects of alpha-tocopherol and beta-carotene supplementation on incidence of large abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) in a
randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. Subjects (n=29133) were 50-69-years-old male smokers, participants in the Finnish alpha-Tocopherol, beta-Carotene Cancer Prevention (ATBC) Study. They were randomised to receive either 50 mg/day of alpha-tocopherol, or 20 mg/day of beta-carotene, or both, or placebo in a 2x2 design. Incidence of AAA was evaluated from mortality and hospital registers. During 5.8 years of follow-up, 181 men were diagnosed with either ruptured AAA (n=77) or nonruptured large AAA treated with aneurysmectomy (n=104). Relative risk (RR) for AAA was 0.83 (95% confidence interval [CI] 0.62-1.11) among men receiving alpha-tocopherol compared with those who did not, and 0.93 (95% CI 0.69-1.24) among men receiving beta-carotene compared with those who did not. A modest though nonsignificant decrease in risk for nonruptured AAA was observed among alpha-tocopherol supplemented men (RR 0.71, 95% CI 0.48-1.04) compared with men not receiving alpha-tocopherol. For beta-carotene, RR for nonruptured AAA was 0.86 (95% CI 0.59-1.27) compared with men not receiving beta-carotene. Neither antioxidant affected risk for ruptured AAA. In conclusion, long-term supplementation with alpha-tocopherol or beta-carotene had no preventive effect on large AAA among male smokers.

[Tornwall ME et al; Atherosclerosis 157 (1): 167-73 (2001)] **PEER REVIEWED**

Epidemiology Studies/ In the Finnish Alpha-Tocopherol, Beta-Carotene Cancer Prevention (ATBC) Study, alpha-tocopherol supplementation decreased prostate cancer incidence, whereas beta-carotene increased the risk of lung cancer and total mortality. Postintervention follow-up provides information regarding duration of the intervention effects and may reveal potential late effects of these antioxidants. Postintervention follow-up assessment of cancer incidence and cause-specific mortality (6 years (May 1, 1993-April 30, 1999)) and total mortality (8 years (May 1, 1993-April 30, 2001)) of 25 563 men. In the ATBC Study, 29 133 male smokers aged 50 to 69 years received alpha-tocopherol (50 mg), beta-carotene (20 mg), both agents, or placebo daily for 5 to 8 years. End point information was obtained from the Finnish Cancer Registry and the Register of Causes of Death. Cancer cases were confirmed through medical record review. Site-specific cancer incidence and total and cause-specific mortality and calendar time-specific risk for lung cancer incidence and total mortality. Overall posttrial relative risk (RR) for lung cancer incidence (n = 1037) was 1.06 (95% confidence interval (CI), 0.94-1.20) among recipients of beta-carotene compared with nonrecipients. For prostate cancer incidence (n = 672), the RR was 0.88 (95% CI, 0.76-1.03) for participants receiving alpha-tocopherol compared with nonrecipients. No late preventive effects on other cancers were observed for either supplement. There were 7261 individuals who died by April 30, 2001, during the posttrial follow-up period; the RR was 1.01 (95% CI, 0.96-1.05) for alphatocopherol recipients vs nonrecipients and 1.07 (95% CI, 1.02-1.12) for beta-carotene recipients vs nonrecipients. Regarding duration of intervention effects and potential late effects, the excess risk for beta-carotene recipients was no longer evident 4 to 6 years after ending the intervention and was primarily due to cardiovascular diseases. The beneficial and adverse effects of supplemental alpha-tocopherol and beta-carotene disappeared during postintervention follow-up. The preventive effects of alpha-tocopherol on prostate cancer require confirmation in other trials. Smokers should avoid beta-carotene supplementation.

EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDIES/ This study investigated the effects of alpha-tocopherol and beta-carotene supplementation on the incidence of gastric cancer. A total of 29,133 male smokers, aged 50-69 years, participated in a placebo-controlled prevention trial, the Alpha-Tocopherol, Beta-Carotene Cancer Prevention (ATBC) Study in southwestern Finland between 1985 and 1993. The men were randomly assigned to receive alpha-tocopherol (50 mg/day) or beta-carotene (20 mg/day) supplementation in a 2 x 2 factorial design. We identified 126 gastric cancer cases during the median follow-up of six years. Of these, 122 were adenocarcinomas: 75 of intestinal type, 30 of diffuse type, and 17 of mixed type. There was no significant effect for either supplementation on the overall incidence of gastric cancer: relative risk (RR) 1.21, 95% confidence interval (CI) 0.85-1.74 for alpha-tocopherol, and RR 1.26, 95% CI 0.88-1.80 for beta-carotene. Subgroup analyses by histologic type suggested an increased risk for beta-carotene on intestinal type cancers, RR 1.59, 95% CI 0.99-2.56. There were no differences across anatomic locations (cardia/noncardia) in the effects of alpha-tocopherol or beta-carotene supplementation. Our study found no overall preventive effect of long-term supplementation with alpha-tocopherol or beta-carotene on gastric cancer in middle-aged male smokers. [Malila N et al; Cancer Causes Control 13 (7): 617-23 (2002)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract

EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDIES/ The Beta-Carotene and Retinol Efficacy Trial (CARET) tested the effect of daily beta-carotene (30 mg) and retinyl palmitate (25,000 IU) on the incidence of lung cancer, other cancers, and death in 18,314 participants who were at high risk for lung cancer because of a history of smoking or asbestos exposure. CARET was stopped ahead of schedule in January 1996 because participants who were randomly assigned to receive the active intervention were found to have a 28% increase in incidence of lung cancer, a 17% increase in incidence of death and a higher rate of cardiovascular disease mortality compared with participants in the placebo group. After the intervention ended, CARET participants returned the study vitamins to their study center and provided a final blood sample. They continue to be followed annually by telephone and mail self-report. Self-reported cancer endpoints were confirmed by review of pathology reports, and death endpoints were confirmed by review of death certificates. All statistical tests were two-sided. With follow-up through December 31, 2001, the post-intervention relative risks of lung cancer and all-cause mortality for the active intervention group compared with the placebo group were 1.12 (95% confidence interval [CI] = 0.97 to 1.31) and 1.08 (95% CI = 0.99 to 1.17), respectively. Smoothed relative risk curves for lung cancer incidence and all-cause mortality indicated that relative risks remained above 1.0 throughout the post-intervention phase. By contrast, the relative risk of cardiovascular disease mortality decreased rapidly to 1.0 after the intervention was stopped. During the post-intervention phase, females had larger relative risks of lung cancer mortality (1.33 versus 1.14; P = .36), cardiovascular disease mortality (1.44 versus 0.93; P = .03), and all-cause mortality (1.37 versus 0.98; P = .001) than males. The previously reported adverse effects of beta-carotene and retinyl palmitate on lung cancer incidence and all-cause mortality in cigarette smokers and individuals with occupational exposure to asbestos persisted after drug administration was stopped although they are no longer statistically significant. Planned subgroup analyses suggest that the excess risks of lung cancer were restricted primarily to females, and cardiovascular disease mortality primarily to females and to former smokers. [Goodman GE et al; J Natl Cancer Inst 96 (23): 1743-50 (2004)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract
/EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDIES/ To study the association between dietary and serum antioxidant vitamins and carotenoids and risk for colorectal cancer in male smokers. A prospective cohort study within a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial testing supplementation with alpha-tocopherol (50 mg/day), beta-carotene (20 mg/day) or both in preventing cancer. Participants of the Alpha-Tocopherol, Beta-Carotene Cancer Prevention Study with complete dietary data and serum samples available from baseline. These included 26,951 middle-aged male smokers among whom 184 colorectal cancer cases were diagnosed during 8 y of follow-up. Relative risks were calculated with Cox proportional hazards models adjusting for trial supplementation, age, body mass index, serum cholesterol, cigarettes smoked per day and physical activity. There was no significant association between dietary vitamin C or E, alpha- or gamma-tocopherol, retinol, alpha- or beta-carotene, lycopene or lutein+zeaxanthin and risk for colorectal cancer. Serum alpha-tocopherol, beta-carotene or retinol was also not associated with the risk, neither did the season when baseline blood was drawn modify the relationship between serum beta-carotene and colorectal cancer risk. Our data support the results from previous studies in which no association between dietary antioxidant vitamins and carotenoids and risk for colorectal cancer has been observed. Likewise, no association between baseline serum antioxidant concentrations and colorectal cancer risk was evident.


/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ Because COX-2 has been implicated as a causative factor in colon carcinogenesis, the present study was designed to investigate the relation between the growth-inhibitory effect of the carotenoid and COX-2 expression in colon cancer cells. The effects of beta-carotene on the growth of human colon adenocarcinoma cells overexpressing (LS-174, HT-29, WiDr) or not expressing (HCT116) COX-2 /were studied/. COX-2 expression induced by heregulin-alpha, apoptosis induction, reactive oxygen species (ROS) production, and extracellular signal-regulated kinase 1/2 (ERK1/2) activation /was also studied/. beta-Carotene (0.5-2.0 micromol/L) decreased COX-2 expression (P < 0.05) and prostaglandin E(2) (PGE(2)) production (P < 0.05) in colon cancer cells. This effect was not observed in cells treated with retinoic acid or retinol. The downregulation of COX-2 by the carotenoid occurred in both untreated and heregulin-treated cells. It was accompanied by an increased ability of cells to undergo apoptosis and by a decrease in intracellular ROS production and in the activation of ERK1/2. Moreover, cells not expressing COX-2 were insensitive to the growth-inhibitory and pro apoptotic effects of the carotenoid. Here, we report that the suppression of COX-2 by beta-carotene may represent a molecular mechanism by which this compound acts as an antitumor agent in colon carcinogenesis.


/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ It was shown that high doses of beta-carotene (>30 uM) decrease proliferation of prostate cancer cells in vitro. However, it is rather doubtful whether such concentration of beta-carotene is really accessible at cellular level. The effect of 3 and 10 uM beta-carotene on proliferation and gene expression in LNCaP and PC-3 prostate cancer cell lines /was studied/. Beta-carotene-more efficiently absorbed from medium by androgen-sensitive LNCaP cells - increased proliferation of LNCaP cells whereas it had weaker effect on PC-3 cells. Initial global analysis of expression of genes in both cell lines treated with
10 uM beta-carotene (Affymetrix HG-U133A) showed remarkable differences in number of responsive genes. Their recognition allows for conclusion that differences between prostate cancer cell lines in response to beta-carotene treatment are due to various androgen sensitivities of LNCaP and PC-3 cells. Detailed analysis of expression of selected genes in beta-carotene treated LNCaP cells at the level of mRNA and protein indicated that the observed increase of proliferation could have been the result of slight induction of a few genes affecting proliferation (c-myc, c-jun) and apoptosis (bcl-2) with no significant effect on major cell cycle control genes (cdk2, RB, E2F-1).

[Dulinska J et al; Biochimica et Biophysica Acta (BBA) - Molecular Basis of Disease 1740 (2): 189-201 (2005)] **PEER REVIEWED**

/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ This study was conducted to investigate the altered gene expression of MCF-7 cell before and after the treatment with beta-carotene using cDNA microarray and to investigate the mechanism which beta-carotene induce breast cancer cell apoptosis. Two fluorescence cDNA probes were made using reverse transcriptional reaction from mRNA of beta-carotene untreated or treated MCF-7 cells (human estrogen receptor positive breast cancer cells), marked with two different fluorescence dyes (cy3 and cy5) respectively, hybridized with expressed cDNA microarray scanned and analyzed by computer system and finally the expressed gene was produced. A total of 21 genes related to cell apoptosis, cell signal transduction, protein translation and immunity were expressed differently after the treatment of beta-carotene, which 3/21 were up-regulated (AF040958, AK001555,g41894), 18/21 were down-regulated(hshsp90r, U83857, AB014509, AF126028, AF053641, AF117386, AF050127, NM_012177, humtopi, AJ250915, U37547, U78798, NM_004849, NM_005346, AF004711, NM_006595, NM_001418, AB015051). It was concluded that beta-carotene may inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells through inducing apoptosis, breaking signal transduction, and blocking protein translation.


/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ The inhibitory effect of beta-carotene on the proliferation of hepatic cancer was studied. Cells from a hepatic cancer cell line SMMC-7721 were incubated in culture media with 20, 40 and 80 mumol/L beta-carotene for 12, 24 and 48 h respectively. MTT test, Trypan blue exclusion test and DNA gel electrophoresis were used. The results of MTT test revealed that beta-carotene (20-80 mumol/L) could inhibit the proliferation of SMMC-7721 cells in a dose-dependent manner. DNA gel electrophoresis showed that the apoptosis of hepatic cancer cells could be induced by beta-carotene (40 mumol/L). It is concluded that the proliferation of hepatic cancer cells inhibited by beta-carotene, probably through interfering DNA metabolism and inducing cell apoptosis.


/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ An alpha-tocopherol, beta-carotene supplementation trial (ATBC) and a chemoprevention trial with beta-carotene and retinoids (CARET trial) were conducted in the 1990s in populations at risk for the development of lung cancer. Both trials had to be discontinued due to significant increases in lung cancer and cardiovascular mortality. Clinical trials to test the cancer preventive effects of beta-carotene are still ongoing, and high concentrations of this provitamin are contained in numerous dietary supplements. Using a cell line derived from a human pulmonary adenocarcinoma (PAC) of Clara cell lineage and immortalized human small airway epithelial cells, our data show that low concentrations of beta-
carotene that can be realistically expected in human tissues after oral administration caused a
significant increase in intracellular cAMP and activated PKA, as well as in phosphorylation of
ERK1/2 and CREB. Furthermore, the proliferation of cells was significantly stimulated by
identical concentrations of beta-carotene as monitored by MTT assays. Control experiments with
retinol also showed stimulation of cell proliferation and activation of PKA in both cell lines. In
light of the fact that PAC is the leading type of lung cancer, these findings suggest that the
growth promoting effects of beta-carotene on this cancer type observed in our experiments may
have contributed to the unfortunate outcome of the ATBC and CARET trials. This interpretation
is supported by the fact that elevated levels of cAMP in the cardiovascular system play a major
role in the genesis of cardiovascular disease, which was also greatly promoted in the CARET
trial. Our data challenge the widely accepted view that beta-carotene may be useful as a cancer
preventive agent.
PubMed Abstract

/OTHER TOXICITY INFORMATION/ The effect of 14 wk of beta-carotene supplementation
(20 mg/day) on the frequency of micronuclei in sputum was studied in 114 heavy smokers in a
double blind trial. Micronuclei reflect DNA damage in exfoliated cells and may thus provide a
marker of early stage carcinogenesis. Pretreatment blood levels of cotinine, beta-carotene, retinol
and vitamins C and E were similar in the placebo group (n = 61) and the treatment group (n =
53). Plasma beta-carotene levels increased 13-fold in the treatment group during intervention.
Initial micronuclei counts (per 3,000 cells) were higher in the treatment group than in the placebo
group (5.0 vs 4.0, p< 0.05). During intervention, the treatment group showed a 47% decrease,
whereas the placebo group showed a non-significant decrease (16%). After adjustment for the
initial levels, the treatment group had 27% lower micronuclei counts than the placebo group at
the end of the trial (95% confidence interval: 9-41%). These results indicate that beta-carotene
may reduce lung cancer risk in man by preventing DNA damage in early stage carcinogenesis.
PubMed Abstract

Drug Warnings:
NOT EFFECTIVE AS SUNSCREEN IN NORMAL INDIVIDUALS & SHOULD NOT BE
USED FOR THAT PURPOSE ... USED WITH CAUTION IN PT WITH IMPAIRED RENAL
OR HEPATIC FUNCTION BECAUSE SAFE USE ... HAS NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED.
[American Society of Hospital Pharmacists. Data supplied on contract from
American Hospital Formulary Service and other current ASHP sources., p. 1976]
**PEER REVIEWED**

Beta carotene is well tolerated. Carotenodermia is usually the only adverse effect. Patients
should be forewarned that carotenodermia will develop after 2-6 weeks of therapy, usually first
noticed as yellowness of the palms of the hands or soles of the feet and to a lesser extent of the
face. Some patients may experience loose stools during beta carotene therapy, but this is sporadic
and may not require discontinuation of therapy. Ecchymoses and arthralgia have been reported
rarely
[McEvoy, G.K. (ed.). American Hospital Formulary Service. AHFS Drug
Information. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Bethesda, MD.
2006., p. 3555] **PEER REVIEWED**
Beta carotene should be used with caution in patients with impaired renal or hepatic function because safe use of the drug in the presence of these conditions has not been established. Although abnormally high blood concentrations of vitamin A do not occur during beta carotene therapy, patients receiving beta carotene should be advised against taking supplementary vitamin A because beta carotene will fulfill normal vitamin A requirements. Patients should be cautioned that large quantities of green or yellow vegetables or their juices or extracts are not suitable substitutes for crystalline beta carotene because consumption of excessive quantities of these vegetables may cause adverse effects such as leukopenia or menstrual disorders. Patients should be warned that the protective effect of beta carotene is not total and that they may still develop considerable burning and edema after sufficient exposure to sunlight. Each patient must establish his own time limit of exposure.

There are no adequate and controlled studies to date in humans. Beta carotene should be used during pregnancy only when the potential benefits justify the possible risks to the fetus. The effect of beta carotene on fertility in humans is not known.

Since it is not known whether beta carotene is distributed into milk, the drug should be used with caution in nursing women.

FDA Pregnancy Risk Category: C /RISK CANNOT BE RULED OUT. Adequate, well controlled human studies are lacking, and animal studies have shown risk to the fetus or are lacking as well. There is a chance of fetal harm if the drug is given during pregnancy; but the potential benefits may outweigh the potential risk./

Yellow discoloration of skin is to be expected; if taking as nutritional supplement, may be a sign that the dose is too high.

Data from two large studies indicate an increased incidence of lung cancers when beta-carotene supplements were given to individuals with a history of smoking and/or asbestos exposure; use of beta-carotene supplements in these subgroups is not recommended.

The use of beta-carotene for the treatment of vitamin A deficiency requires medical management.


[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**
Smokers should be made aware that supplemental intake of beta-carotene of 20 mg daily or greater were associated with a higher incidence of lung cancer in smokers. Smokers should avoid beta-carotene supplementation pending the establishment of a safe dose for smokers.

Pregnant women and nursing mothers should avoid intakes of beta-carotene greater than 6 mg/day from nutritional supplements.

**Populations at Special Risk:**

Two large studies have found an increased incidence in lung cancers when beta-carotene supplements were given to individuals with a history of smoking and/or asbestos exposure. One study of 29,000 males with a history of smoking found an 18% increase in the incidence of lung cancer in the group receiving 20 mg of beta-carotene a day for 5 to 8 years as compared with those receiving placebo. Another study of 18,000 individuals found 28% more lung cancers in individuals with a history of smoking and/or asbestos exposure who took 30 mg of beta-carotene in addition to 25,000 Units of retinol a day for 4 years as compared with those receiving placebo. However, one study of 22,000 male physicians, some of them smokers and former smokers, found no increased risk of lung cancer at doses of 50 mg of beta-carotene every other day for 12 years.

**Emergency Medical Treatment:**

Emergency Medical Treatment:

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The following Overview, *** VITAMIN A ***, is relevant for this HSDB record chemical.

**Life Support:**
- This overview assumes that basic life support measures have been instituted.

**Clinical Effects:**

0.2.1 SUMMARY OF EXPOSURE

A) USES: Used as a dietary supplement and found in some topical preparations to promote wound healing. Naturally present in high concentrations in some foods.

B) PHARMACOLOGY: Essential nutrient required for bone development, vision, reproduction, and differentiation and maintenance of epithelial tissue. Required cofactor for glycosylation of glycoproteins.

C) TOXICOLOGY: High doses stimulate bone resorption and inhibit keratinization. Excessive doses are stored in hepatic Ito cells, which become hypertrophied and obstruct sinusoidal blood flow eventually causing portal hypertension.

D) EPIDEMIOLOGY: Poisoning is rare, with acute toxicity even more unusual than chronic toxicity.

E) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE

1) ACUTE: Ingestion or parenteral overdose may produce significant increases in intracranial pressure, which may result in bulging fontanelles (in infants), nausea/vomiting, abdominal pain, headache, blurred vision, irritability and other effects associated with increased intracranial pressure. Exfoliation of the skin has also been reported.

2) CHRONIC: Signs and symptoms of toxicity include nausea/vomiting, abdominal pain, anorexia, fatigue, irritability, diplopia, headache, bone pain, alopecia, skin lesions, cheilosis, and signs of increased intracranial pressure (e.g. papilledema).

   a) Laboratory findings include elevated liver enzymes and bilirubin, increased INR, hypercalcemia, elevated erythrocyte sedimentation rate and periosteal calcification on radiographs. Increased opening pressure may be noted on lumbar puncture.

   b) Symptoms usually begin to resolve within days to weeks after discontinuation of vitamin A use. The prognosis is usually excellent with few, if any, long term sequelae.

3) BETA CAROTENE: There are no known cases of vitamin A toxicity associated with beta-carotene ingestion, although excessive beta-carotene ingestion may result in carotenemia (yellow skin discoloration).

0.2.4 HEENT

A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE

1) Diplopia, nystagmus, tinnitus and papilledema may be noted (pseudotumor cerebri) as a result of vitamin A intoxication.
0.2.7 NEUROLOGIC
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) Fatigue, irritability, headache, lethargy, papilledema, and increased intracranial pressure may be noted. Unusual effects include seizures and cranial nerve palsy.

0.2.8 GASTROINTESTINAL
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and anorexia may be noted.

0.2.9 HEPATIC
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) Chronic hypervitaminosis A may result in elevation of liver enzymes, hepatic fibrosis, hepatosplenomegaly and hepatitis. In severe cases, it may progress to cirrhosis, portal hypertension and ascites. Liver transplant was necessary in one patient following chronic toxicity. One report of fulminant hepatic failure was reported in an adult following acute acitretin (metabolite of vitamin A) ingestion.

0.2.12 FLUID-ELECTROLYTE
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) Hypercalcemia may occur as a result of chronic vitamin A intoxication.

0.2.13 HEMATOLOGIC
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) Elevated erythrocyte sedimentation rate is common. Hypoprothrombinemia may develop in patients with hepatic injury.

0.2.14 DERMATOLOGIC
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) The dermal changes are frequently among the first signs of hypervitaminosis A and are likely to include cheilosis, dryness, pruritus, desquamation, seborrhea-like eruptions, skin pigmentation, brittle nails and alopecia. Facial swelling associated with palmar-plantar desquamation may be noted following overdose with isotretinoin (Accutane(R)).

0.2.15 MUSCULOSKELETAL
A) WITH POISONING/EXPOSURE
1) Subcutaneous swelling, pain in bones and joints, with tenderness over the long bones commonly occurs.

0.2.20 REPRODUCTIVE
A) Vitamin A is classified as FDA pregnancy category X. The safety of vitamin A exceeding 6000 units/day during pregnancy has not been established. Animal reproduction studies have demonstrated fetal abnormalities associated with vitamin A overdose in several species.

Laboratory:
A) Plasma vitamin A concentrations may be helpful in diagnosis, but are not clinically useful in treatment and are not available at most institutions. Obtain serum aminotransferase level, bilirubin, INR, and calcium concentrations in patients with chronic overdose.
B) Lumbar puncture may be necessary to confirm the diagnosis of benign intracranial hypertension and relieve symptoms.
C) Radiographic changes include: pericapsular, ligamentous, and subperiosteal calcification; cortical thickening in the shafts of long bones; diffuse osteopenia; and widened skull sutures in infants.

Treatment Overview:

0.4.2 ORAL/PARENTERAL EXPOSURE

A) MANAGEMENT OF MILD TO MODERATE TOXICITY
1) Care is symptomatic and supportive, most patients recover with cessation of vitamin A exposure.
2) Immediately discontinue exposure to vitamin A. Signs and symptoms of vitamin A toxicity generally resolve within days to weeks following withdrawal of vitamin A.

B) MANAGEMENT OF SEVERE TOXICITY
1) Symptoms may persist for a prolonged period following the chronic use of vitamin A due to its highly fat-soluble nature.

C) DECONTAMINATION
1) PREHOSPITAL: In general, doses of less than 300,000 International Units in children and less than 1,000,000 International Units in adults do NOT require decontamination. Activated charcoal should be administered for ingestions above 300,000 International Units in children and greater than 1,000,000 International Units in adults.

D) BENIGN INTRACRANIAL HYPERTENSION
1) The majority of patients with pseudotumor cerebri improve with discontinuation of vitamin A. In rare cases, lumbar puncture with drainage of CSF may be required to alleviate symptoms.

E) PATIENT DISPOSITION
1) HOME CRITERIA: Acute unintentional ingestions of less than 300,000 International Units in children and 1,000,000 International Units in adults do not require gastric decontamination. Acute pediatric ingestions of more than 300,000 International Units can be treated at home with gastric decontamination.
2) OBSERVATION CRITERIA: Symptomatic patients, and those with deliberate ingestion should be referred to a healthcare facility for evaluation.
3) ADMISSION CRITERIA: ACUTE: Children who are symptomatic (ie, vomiting, irritability, bulging fontanelle, and other signs of increased intracranial pressure) should be admitted for observation. CHRONIC: Pediatric and adult patients with chronic hypervitaminosis A should be removed from the source of exposure and admitted based on evaluation of liver enzymes, INR, electrolytes, neurologic status, and dermatologic problems. The need for admission is based upon the severity of clinical illness and laboratory abnormalities.
4) CONSULT CRITERIA: Consult a medical toxicologist or poison center in patients with severe toxicity or in whom the diagnosis is unclear.

F) PITFALLS
1) Acute overdose rarely causes clinical toxicity; avoid over treatment.
G) PHARMACOKINETICS
1) Vitamin A is converted to retinol prior to absorption, primarily in the small intestine. In the plasma it is carried by retinol binding protein. It is distributed primarily (90%) to the liver.

H) DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS
1) Other conditions causing increased intracranial pressure and papilledema (i.e., intracranial tumor, malignant hypertension, optic neuropathy, cerebral venous sinus thrombosis). Other disorders causing elevations of liver enzymes (acetaminophen overdose, viral hepatitis).

Range of Toxicity:

A) TOXICITY: Significant individual variation (e.g., age, diet, and preexisting disease) may reduce the amount of dietary and non-dietary vitamin A necessary to produce toxicity.

B) ACUTE: Ingestion of more than 1 million International Units in adults, and more than 300,000 International Units in children has caused acute toxicity.

C) CHRONIC: Signs and symptoms of vitamin A toxicity are most commonly associated with chronic ingestion of greater than 10 times the RDA for weeks to months, or more than 50,000 International Units/day by adults and more than 25,000 International Units/day by children.

D) There are no known cases of vitamin A toxicity associated with beta-carotene ingestion.

E) THERAPEUTIC: RECOMMENDED DIETARY ALLOWANCE: ADULT: Female 2,310 International Units/day; Male: 3,000 International Units/day. CHILD: 1 to 3 years old: 1,000 International Units/day.

Antidote and Emergency Treatment:
/SRP:/ Basic treatment: Establish a patent airway (oropharyngeal or nasopharyngeal airway, if needed). Suction if necessary. Watch for signs of respiratory insufficiency and assist ventilations if needed. Administer oxygen by nonrebreather mask at 10 to 15 L/min. Monitor for pulmonary edema and treat if necessary ... . Monitor for shock and treat if necessary ... . Anticipate seizures and treat if necessary ... . For eye contamination, flush eyes immediately with water. Irrigate each eye continuously with 0.9% saline (NS) during transport ... . Do not use emetics. For ingestion, rinse mouth and administer 5 ml/kg up to 200 ml of water for dilution if the patient can swallow, has a strong gag reflex, and does not drool ... . Cover skin burns with dry sterile dressings after decontamination ... . /Poisons A and B/
Advanced treatment: Consider orotracheal or nasotracheal intubation for airway control in the patient who is unconscious, has severe pulmonary edema, or is in severe respiratory distress. Positive-pressure ventilation techniques with a bag valve mask device may be beneficial. Consider drug therapy for pulmonary edema ... Consider administering a beta agonist such as albuterol for severe bronchospasm ... . Monitor cardiac rhythm and treat arrhythmias as necessary ... . Start IV administration of D5W /SRP: "To keep open", minimal flow rate/. Use 0.9% saline (NS) or lactated Ringer's if signs of hypovolemia are present. For hypotension with signs of hypovolemia, administer fluid cautiously. Watch for signs of fluid overload ... . Treat seizures with diazepam or lorazepam ... Use proparacaine hydrochloride to assist eye irrigation ... /Poisons A and B/

Animal Toxicity Studies:

Non-Human Toxicity Excerpts:
/LABORATORY ANIMALS: Subchronic or Prechronic Exposure/ The inhibitory effects of beta-carotene on preneoplastic lesions induced in male Wistar rats by the resistant hepatocyte model was investigated. Rats were divided into six groups. Initiation was performed in all animals by a single injection of diethylnitrosamine. During the selection/promotion period five doses of 2-acetylaminofluorene were administered to the rats and a partial hepatectomy was performed. To three different groups beta-carotene was given by gavage throughout the experiment, before the initiation or during the selection/promotion period respectively. Three other groups served as controls and received corn oil instead of the carotenoid. At the end of the study (8 weeks), beta-carotene administration throughout the experiment reduced the incidence (p< 0.005), multiplicity as well as the total number and size of hepatocyte nodules. Furthermore, it significantly decreased the number of foci per sq cm (p< 0.05), the average focal area (p< 0.01) and the percentage of liver parenchyma occupied (p< 0.01). Similar results were observed when beta-carotene was given only before the initiation. However, the administration of the carotenoid during the selection/promotion period did not result in significant decreases of these parameters. These results suggest that the inhibitory effects of beta-carotene are primarily exerted on the initiation phase of the hepatocarcinogenic process. Nevertheless, continuous long term exposure to the carotenoid would confer a greater degree of protection. In addition, by means of an analysis of correlation a positive relationship was found between the number of hepatocyte nodules and the hepatic concentration of beta-carotene. In contrast, an inverse relationship was observed between the number of nodules and the hepatic concentration of total vitamin A.

[Moreno FS et al; Carcinogenesis 12 (10): 1817-22 (1991)] **PEER REVIEWED**

/LABORATORY ANIMALS: Chronic Exposure or Carcinogenicity/ In this study, the inhibitory effect of natural alpha-carotene, obtained from palm oil was compared with that of beta-carotene on spontaneous liver carcinogenesis in C3H/He male mice. The mean number of hepatomas per mouse was significantly decreased by alpha-carotene supplementation (oral administration in
drinking water at a concentration of 0.05%, at pleasure) as compared with that in the control group (p< 0.001, Student's t test). On the other hand, beta-carotene, at the same dose as alpha-carotene, did not show any such significant difference from the control group.

[Murakoshi M et al; Cancer Res 52 (23): 6583-7 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED**

/P LABORATORY ANIMALS: Chronic Exposure or Carcinogenicity/ The effects of beta-carotene (BC) on ventricular remodeling after myocardial infarction were studied. Myocardial infarction was induced in Wistar rats that were then treated with a BC diet (500 mg/kg of diet per day; MI-BC; n = 27) or a regular diet (MI; n = 27). Hearts were analyzed in vivo and in vitro after 6 mo. BC caused decreased left ventricular wall thickness (MI = 1.49 + or - 0.3 mm, MI-BC = 1.23 + or - 0.2 mm, P = 0.027) and increased diastolic (MI = 0.83 + or - 0.15 cm2, MI-BC = 0.98 + or - 0.14 cm2, P = 0.020) and systolic (MI = 0.56 + or - 0.12 cm2, MI-BC = 0.75 + or - 0.13 cm2, P = 0.002) left ventricular chamber areas. With respect to systolic function, the BC group presented less change in fractional area than did controls (MI = 32.35 + or - 6.67, MI-BC = 23.77 + or - 6.06, P = 0.004). There was no difference in transmitral diastolic flow velocities between groups. In vitro results showed decreased maximal isovolumetric systolic pressure (MI = 125.5 + or - 24.1 mm Hg, MI-BC = 95.2 + or - 28.4 mmHg, P = 0.019) and increased interstitial myocardial collagen concentration (MI = 3.3 + or - 1.2%, MI-BC = 5.8 + or - 1.7%, P = 0.004) in BC-treated animals. Infarct sizes were similar between groups (MI = 45.0 + or - 6.6%, MI-BC = 48.0 + or - 5.8%, P = 0.246). Taken together, these data suggest that BC has adverse effects on ventricular remodeling after myocardial infarction.

[Zornoff LA et al; Nutrition 22 (2): 146-51 (2006)] **PEER REVIEWED**

/P LABORATORY ANIMALS: Developmental or Reproductive Toxicity/ A 3 generation reproduction study in rats receiving beta carotene at a dietary concentration of 0.1% has revealed no evidence of harm to the fetus.


/P LABORATORY ANIMALS: Developmental or Reproductive Toxicity/ Reproduction studies in rats using beta carotene dosages 300-400 times the maximum usual human dosage have shown the drug to be fetotoxic (an increase in resorption rate) but not teratogenic; at 75 times the maximum usual human dosage or less, no such fetotoxicity was observed.


/P LABORATORY ANIMALS: Developmental or Reproductive Toxicity/ No evidence of impaired fertility has been observed in a 3 generation reproduction study in rats receiving the drug at a dietary concentration of 0.1%, nor in male rats receiving 100 times the recommended human dosage.

Chromosomal aberrations induced by beta-carotene (a natural food color) were studied on bone marrow cells of mice in vivo. Chromosome aberrations induced by beta-carotene were not significantly higher than those of the control (olive oil) in the dose range 0.27 to 27 mg/kg body weight. The genotoxicity can be attributed to the chemical composition of the dye. In so far as genotoxicity is concerned the carotenoid beta-carotene can be safely used as a food colorant.

[Agarwal K et al; Cytobios 74 (296): 23-8 (1993)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract

The anticlastogenic activity of beta-carotene against cyclophosphamide was studied in bone marrow cells of mice in vivo. Seven days' oral priming with beta-carotene (2.7 and 27 mg/kg body weight) followed by an acute treatment with cyclophosphamide (25 mg/kg body weight; ip) inhibited clastogenicity. The values of chromosomal aberrations and micronucleated polychromatic erythrocytes were consistently lower than the sum of the expected values of beta-carotene and cyclophosphamide given individually. This antagonistic response indicates anticlastogenic activity of beta-carotene against cyclophosphamide.

[Mukherjee A et al; Mutat Res 263 (1): 41-6 (1991)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract

This study investigated the individual and combined effects of beta-carotene with a common flavonoid (naringin, quercetin or rutin) on DNA damage induced by 4-(methylnitrosamino)-1-(3-pyridyl)-1-butanone (NNK), a potent tobacco-related carcinogen in human. A human lung cancer cell line, A549, was pre-incubated with beta-carotene, a flavonoid, or both for 1h followed by incubation with NNK for 4 h. Then, DNA strand breaks and the level of 7-methylguanine (7-mGua), a product of NNK metabolism by cytochrome P450 (CYP) were determined/ that beta-carotene at 20 microM significantly enhanced NNK-induced DNA strand breaks and 7-mGua levels by 90% (p < 0.05) and 70% (p < 0.05), respectively, and that the effect of beta-carotene was associated with an increased metabolism of NNK by CYP because the concomitant addition of 1-aminobenzotriazole, a CYP inhibitor, with beta-carotene to cells strongly inhibited NNK-induced DNA strand breaks. In contrast to beta-carotene, incubation of cells with naringin, quercetin or rutin added at 23 uM led to significant inhibition of NNK-induced DNA strand breaks, and the effect was in the order of quercetin > naringin > rutin. However, these flavonoids did not significantly affect the level of 7-mGua induced by NNK. Co-incubation of beta-carotene with any of these flavonoids significantly inhibited the enhancing effect of beta-carotene on NNK-induced DNA strand breaks; the effects of flavonoids were dose-dependent and were also in the order of quercetin > naringin > rutin. Co-incubation of beta-carotene with any of these flavonoids also significantly inhibited the loss of beta-carotene incorporated into the cells, and the effects of the flavonoids were also in the order of quercetin > naringin > rutin. The protective effects of these flavonoids may be attributed to their antioxidant activities because they significantly decreased intracellular ROS, and the effects were also in the order of quercetin > naringin > rutin. These in vitro results suggest that a combination of beta-carotene with naringin, rutin, or quercetin may increase the safety of beta-carotene.

/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ Since it has to be expected that individuals exposed to oxidative stress who take supplements of beta-carotene are simultaneously exposed to both beta-carotene cleavage products (CPs) and oxidative stress, and both exposures have been demonstrated to cause genotoxic effects in primary rat hepatocytes, cyto- and genotoxic effects on primary rat hepatocytes after supplementation of the medium with increasing concentrations of a CP mixture during exposure to oxidative stress by treatment with either DMNQ (2,3-dimethoxy-1,4-naphthoquinone) or hypoxia/reoxygenation (Hy/Reox) was investigated. The cytological endpoints analysed were the mitotic indices, the percentages of apoptotic and necrotic cells, the percentages of micronucleated (MN) cells and the number of chromosomal aberrations (CAs) and sister chromatid exchanges (SCE). The results obtained clearly demonstrate that the CP mixture enhances the genotoxic effects of oxidative stress exposure, whereas it had no effect at all on the endpoints of cytotoxicity studied. These results further support the hypothesis that CP might be responsible for the reported carcinogenic response in the beta-CArotene and Retinol Efficacy Trial (CARET) and Alpha-Tocopherol Beta-carotene Cancer prevention (ATBC) chemoprevention trials.

[Alija AJ et al; Carcinogenesis 27 (6): 1128-33 (2006)] **PEER REVIEWED**

/ALTERNATIVE and IN VITRO TESTS/ This article reports the first evidence that beta-carotene, combined with cigarette smoke condensate (TAR), regulates heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1) via its transcriptional factor Bach1 and modulates cell growth. Both immortalized rat fibroblasts (RAT-1) and human lung cancer cells (Mv1Lu) exposed to TAR (25 microg/ml), exhibited an initial (6 h) induction of HO-1, followed by a late (24 h) repression due to the activation of Bach1. Heme oxygenase-1 repression was much more consistent when TAR was administered in combination with beta-carotene (1 microM) for 24 h; at this concentration the carotenoid per se did not have any effect on HO-1. Interestingly, the HO-1 repression following TAR plus beta-carotene treatment caused a resynchronization of RAT-1 cell-cycle with a significant increase in the S-phase, and this was probably due to the decreased intracellular levels of carbon monoxide and bilirubin, both of which have antiproliferative effects. The role of HO-1 repression in increasing cell growth was also confirmed in Mv1Lu cells by the "knock down" of the Bach1 gene, thus demonstrating as HO-1 repression is a conserved mechanism by which cells can react to oxidative stress.

[Palozza P et al; Antioxid Redox Signal 8 (5-6): 1069-80 (2006)] **PEER REVIEWED**

/OTHER TOXICITY INFORMATION/ The anticarcinogenic properties of beta-carotene have so far been attributed to its scavenger properties in deactivating or trapping reactive chemical species such as singlet oxygen and certain organic free radicals. Smoking results in increased excretion of detoxification products of electrophilic agents (mercapturic acids) in urine. Since reactive electrophilic intermediates are involved in carcinogenesis, a double blind, placebo controlled intervention trial was performed to investigate whether the intake of beta-carotene by smokers would affect urinary thioether excretion. Before the intervention the beta-carotene group (n = 62) and the placebo group (n = 61) had similar thioether excretion levels in urine (4.2 vs 4.3 mmol/mol creatinine). During the intervention (20 mg beta-carotene daily for 14 wk) the placebo group showed a 12% increase, whereas the beta-carotene group showed a 5% decrease (p=0.004). After the intervention the beta-carotene group had a 15% lower thioether excretion level.
than the placebo group (4.1 vs 4.7 mmol/mol creatinine; p= 0.0017). Our study shows that urinary thioether excretion varies considerably over time, and that smokers have a decreased excretion of thioethers in urine after the use of beta-carotene.

[Bos RP et al; Int Arch Occup Environ Health 64 (3): 189-93 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED**

PubMed Abstract

Metabolism/Pharmacokinetics:

Metabolism/Metabolites:
A portion of the beta-carotene is converted to retinol in the wall of the small intestine, principally by its initial cleavage at the 15,15' double bond to form two molecules of retinal. Some of the retinal is further oxidized to retinoic acid; only one-half is reduced to retinol, which is then esterified and transported in the lymph. ...


Approximately 20 to 60% of beta-carotene is metabolized to retinaldehyde and then converted to retinol, primarily in the intestinal wall. A small amount of beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A in the liver. The proportion of beta-carotene converted to vitamin A diminishes inversely to the intake of beta-carotene, as long as the dosages are higher than one to two times the daily requirements. High doses of beta-carotene do not lead to abnormally high serum concentrations of vitamin A.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Beta carotene may be converted to 2 molecules of retinal by cleavage at the 15-15' double bond in the center of the molecule. Most of the retinal is reduced to retinol which is then conjugated with glucuronic acid and excreted in urine and feces. Some retinal may be further oxidized to retinoic acid which can be decarboxylated and further metabolized, secreted into bile, and excreted in feces as the glucuronide.


Two pathways have been suggested for the conversion of carotenoids to vitamin A in mammals, central cleavage and eccentric cleavage. An enzyme, beta-carotenoid-15,15'-dioxygenase, has been partly purified from the intestines of several species and has been identified in several other organs and species. The enzyme, which converts beta-carotene into two molecules of retinal in good yield, requires molecular oxygen and is inhibited by sulphydryl binding reagents and iron binding reagents. Most provitamin A carotenoids, including the beta-apo-carotenals, are cleaved to retinal by this enzyme. Its maximal activity in the rabbit is approximately 200 times that required to meet nutritional needs but is less than 50% of that expected to produce signs of vitamin A toxicity. Excentric cleavage unquestionably occurs in plants and some microorganisms and might occur in mammals. Thus far, however, carotenoid dioxygenase with eccentric bond specificity has been identified in mammals, the yield of beta-apo-carotenals from
beta-carotene in vivo and in vitro is very low, and beta-apo-carotenals are formed nonbiologically from beta-carotene.

[Olson JA; J Nutr 119 (1): 105-8 (1989)] **PEER REVIEWED**

The carotenoids are not converted to retinol very rapidly, so that overdoses of the carotenoids do not cause vitamin A toxicity. /Carotenoids/

[Shoden & Griffin; Fundamentals of Clinical Nutrition: 77 (1980)] **PEER REVIEWED**

Absorption, Distribution & Excretion:
Carotenoids are absorbed and transported via lymphatics to the liver. They circulate in association with lipoproteins, and are found in liver, adrenal, testes, and adipose tissue, and can be converted to vitamin A in numerous tissues, including the liver. Some beta carotene is absorbed as such and circulates in association with lipoproteins; it apparently partitions into body lipids and can be converted to vitamin A in numerous tissues, including the liver.


Absorption of beta-carotene depends on the presence of dietary fat and bile in the intestinal tract.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Unchanged beta-carotene is found in various tissues, primarily fat tissues, adrenal glands, and ovaries. Small concentrations are found in the liver.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Only about one-third of beta-carotene or other carotenoids is absorbed by human beings. The absorption of carotenoids takes place in a relatively nonspecific fashion and depends upon the presence of bile and absorbable fat in the intestinal tract; it is greatly decreased by steatorrhea, chronic diarrhea, and very-low-fat diets.


Absorption of dietary beta-carotene depends on the presence of bile and absorbable fat in the intestinal tract and is greatly decreased by steatorrhea and chronic diarrhea. These factors may have a similar effect on absorption of therapeutic doses of beta carotene. During absorption, dietary beta carotene is metabolized to vitamin A in the wall of the small intestine. Studies utilizing 50 ug doses of radiolabeled beta carotene indicated that only 20-30% of the drug was absorbed unchanged. Blood carotene concentrations reach a maximum and carotenodermia usually develops about 4-6 wk after beginning beta carotene therapy.

Beta carotene is widely distributed in the body and accumulates in the skin. An appreciable amount is stored in various tissues, particularly depot fat. It is not known whether beta carotene is distributed into milk. [McEvoy, G.K. (ed.). American Hospital Formulary Service. AHFS Drug Information. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Bethesda, MD. 2006., p. 3556] **PEER REVIEWED**


A physiologic compartmental model of beta-carotene metabolism was constructed and tested. This model suggests that 22% of the beta-carotene dose is absorbed: 17.8% as intact beta-carotene and 4.2% as retinoid. Also, it suggests that both liver and enterocyte are important in converting beta-carotene to retinoid; 43% is converted in liver and 57% in enterocyte. Finally, it suggests that the mean residence time for beta-carotene is 51 days and that the 73 mumole dose does not alter the fractional transfer coefficients of the system after absorption takes place. The issue of central versus eccentric cleavage of beta-carotene in humans can be studied with further modeling combined with use of appropriately labeled beta-carotene. [Novotny JA et al; J Lipid Res 36 (8): 1825-38 (1995)] **PEER REVIEWED**

PubMed Abstract

Surgically excised human abdominal skin was mounted on Franz perfusion chambers to assess the cutaneous penetration of topical beta-carotene as well as its metabolism, after a 24-hr incubation period, whereas hairless mice received topical beta-carotene 24 hr before assaying epidermal beta-carotene and retinoid concentrations. Epidermal retinoid and beta-carotene concentrations were determined by high-pressure liquid chromatography. Topical beta-carotene penetrated well into human and mouse epidermis and induced a 10-fold (human) and a threefold (mouse) increase of epidermal retinyl esters, which demonstrates that topical beta-carotene is converted into retinyl esters by human and mouse epidermis and thus appears as a precursor of epidermal vitamin A. [Antille C et al; Exp Dermatol 13 (9): 558-61 (2004)] **PEER REVIEWED**

PubMed Abstract

Mechanism of Action:

IN HEMATOPORPHYRIN PHOTOSENSITIZED MICE BETA-CAROTENE SHOWED PHOTOPROTECTION WAS DUE TO FREE RADICAL SCAVENGING OR SINGLET O QUENCHING BUT ALSO A POSSIBLE ROLE OF 400 NM LIGHT ABSORPTION, A PROPERTY OF BETA-CAROTENE. [MOSHELL AN, BJORNSON L; J INVEST DERMATOL 68 (3): 157 (1977)] **PEER REVIEWED**

PubMed Abstract

Beta carotene protects patients with erythropoietic protoporphyria against severe photosensitivity reactions (burning sensation, edema, erythema, pruritus, and/or cutaneous lesions). The drug has no effect on the basic biochemical abnormality of erythropoietic protoporphyria (eg, erythrocyte, plasma, and stool concentrations of protoporphyrins are not altered by the drug). The precise
mechanism by which the drug exerts photoprotection has not been established. There is some evidence that photosensitizers may act through the formation of singlet excited oxygen and/or free radicals. Since in vitro studies indicate that beta carotene can quench free radicals and singlet excited oxygen, this may be the mechanism by which the drug acts. It is unlikely that beta carotene acts simply as a filter for the wavelengths of light that induce phototoxic effects.


beta-Carotene inhibits UV-B carcinogenesis. beta-Carotene is an excellent quencher of singlet oxygen, and can quench free radicals. beta-Carotene has been shown to quench singlet oxygen/free radical reactions in the skin of porphyric mice, and has been found to quench excited species formed on irradiation of mouse skin by UV-B.


Interactions:
Cigarette smoking is associated with decreased plasma levels of ascorbate and beta-carotene, which indicates that the smoking related chronic inflammatory response leads to an imbalance of oxidant/antioxidant homeostasis and possible predisposition to oxidant inflicted tissue damage and disease.


Weanling male Sprague-Dawley rats were pair-fed beta-carotene (56.5 mg/L of diet) for 8 weeks, with and without ethanol. As expected, ethanol increased CYP2E1 (measured by Western blots) from 67 + or - 8 to 317 + or - 27 densitometric units (p < 0.001). Furthermore, beta-carotene potentiated the ethanol induction to 442 + or - 38 densitometric units (p < 0.01) with a significant interaction (p = 0.012). The rise was confirmed by a corresponding increase in the hydroxylation of p-nitrophenol, a specific substrate for CYP2E1, and by the inhibition with diethyl dithiocarbamate (50 microM). Beta-carotene alone also significantly induced CYP4A1 protein (328 + or - 49 vs. 158 + or - 17 densitometric units, p < 0.05). The corresponding CYP4A1 mRNA (measured by Northern blots) was also increased (p < 0.05) and there was a significant interaction of the two treatments (p = 0.015). The combination of ethanol and beta-carotene had no significant effect on either total cytochrome P-450 or CYP1A1/2, CYP2B, CYP3A, and CYP4A2/3 contents. Beta-carotene potentiates the CYP2E1 induction by ethanol in rat liver and also increases CYP4A1, which may, at least in part, explain the associated hepatotoxicity.


AFLATOXIN B1 (4 MG/KG/DAY, ORALLY) ADMIN TO RATS FOR 26 DAYS INHIBITED THE FORMATION OF VITAMIN A FROM BETA-CAROTENE IN THE INTESTINAL MUCOSA.

[Hikaraishi S; Kanagawa Kenritsu Eiyo Tanki Daigaku Kiyo 9: 20 (1977)] **PEER REVIEWED**
SULFITE-MEDIATED BETA-CAROTENE DESTRUCTION WAS INVESTIGATED; IT WAS INHIBITED BY ALPHA-TOCOPHEROL, 1,2-DIHYDROXYBENZENE-3,5-DISULFONIC ACID & BUTYLATED HYDROXYTOLUENE [PEISER GD, YANG SF; J AGRIC FOOD CHEM 27 (2): 446 (1979)] **PEER REVIEWED**

SENCAR mice were used to determine the effects of the provitamin A compound beta-carotene on papilloma formation and the conversion of papillomas to carcinomas in a two stage protocol with one application of the initiator 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene (20 ug) and 20 weekly applications of the promotor 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate (2 ug). A purified vitamin A-free diet was supplemented with beta-carotene at four levels (0.6, 6, 60 and 600 ug/g of diet) for female mice and two levels (60 and 600 ug/g) for male mice. Dietary supplementations of beta-carotene did not result in significant changes in body weight and survival of female and male mice. However, papillomas developed more rapidly and papilloma incidence (% mice with papillomas) reached its maximum (100%) sooner in male mice fed 600 ug of beta-carotene/g of diet than those fed 60 ug/g. There were smaller differences in papilloma incidence among the dietary groups in female mice, but the papilloma incidence again reached 100% sooner in mice fed 600 ug of beta-carotene/g of diet. Female and male mice fed 600 ug of beta-carotene/g of diet had significantly higher papilloma yields (average number of papillomas/mouse) than other dietary groups and a very low percentage of these papillomas converted to carcinomas in these mice. Thus, beta-carotene at 600 ug/g inhibited the conversion of papillomas to carcinomas in both sexes. In addition, papilloma yields were higher in female mice and these papillomas regressed more quickly than those in the corresponding groups of male mice. In conclusion, dietary beta-carotene caused differential effects on papilloma and carcinoma yields and sex-dependent differences in papilloma formation in female and male SENCAR mice treated with 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene and 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate in a two-stage carcinogenesis protocol.

[Chen LC et al; Carcinogenesis 14 (4): 713-7 (1993)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract

Preventive effects of artificial beta-carotene on the development of rat mammary gland adenocarcinomas induced by 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene were studied in rats maintained on a diet containing beta-carotene at a dose of 2.5 mg/animal within 10 wk, which was initiated after the carcinogen administration. The carotenoid treatment course caused the following effects: manifestation of adenocarcinomas induced by 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene was decreased, latent period of neoplasm development as well as the rate of tumor differentiation were increased and metastatic spreading into the regional lymph nodes was inhibited.


The antitumor-promoting activity of alpha-carotene was also compared with that of beta-carotene against two stage mouse lung carcinogenesis (initiator, 4-nitroquinoline 1-oxide; promoter, glycerol). alpha-Carotene, but not beta-carotene, reduced the number of lung tumors per mouse to about 30% of that in the control group (p< 0.001, Student's t test). The higher potency of the antitumor promoting action of alpha-carotene compared to beta-carotene was confirmed in other experimental systems; eg, alpha-carotene was also found to have a stronger effect than beta-carotene in suppressing the promoting activity of 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate on skin carcinogenesis in 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene initiated mice.

[Murakoshi M et al; Cancer Res 52 (23): 6583-7 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract
The inhibitory effects of beta-carotene on cyclophosphamide induced chromosomal aberrations in mouse bone marrow cells were investigated. Male Balb C mice, 8-10 wk old, were treated with beta-carotene (0.5, 1.0, 2.0, 5.0, 10, 25, 50, 100, and 200 mg/kg) or with corn oil (0.05 ml/10 g body weight) by gavage for 5 consecutive days. Four hr after the last treatment with or without beta-carotene, the animals were ip injected with cyclophosphamide and killed 24 hr later for cytological preparations and analysis. The results obtained show that beta-carotene provides significant protection against the clastogenicity of cyclophosphamide. The maximum reduction in the frequency of aberrant metaphases (26.9%) and in total number of chromosomal aberrations were observed when beta-carotene was used at 50 mg/kg. Nevertheless, no direct dose response relationship was detected, suggesting that beta-carotene might act through different mechanisms at different doses.

[Salvadori DM et al; Environ Mol Mutagen 20 (3): 206-10 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED**

Of the several models for lung carcinogenesis, two appear appropriate for chemoprevention studies based upon dose response, tumor type, and tumor localization. One model utilizes the direct-acting carcinogen methylNitrosourea, and the other utilizes a carcinogen (diethylnitrosamine) requiring metabolic activation. Tumors appear rapidly in both models (within 6 months), and the model systems are responsive to modulation by several classes of potential chemopreventive agents. For example, the retinoid N-(4-hydroxyphenyl) retinamide reduces the incidence of lung adenosquamous carcinoma, but retinol or beta-carotene are ineffective when administered alone. However, concomitant administration of these compounds reduces the incidence of non-neoplastic dysplasias as well as adenosquamous carcinomas of the lung. In the methylNitrosourea system, retinoids in general have been ineffective in reducing the incidence of tracheobronchial squamous cell carcinomas.

[Moon RC et al; Monogr Natl Cancer Inst 13: 45-9 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED**

The putative cancer preventive potential of beta-carotene may be explained by its antioxidant capacity to prevent free radical induced DNA damage. To evaluate this hypothesis, the effect of 14 wk of beta-carotene supplementation on the frequency of sister chromatid exchanges in lymphocytes was studied in 143 heavy smokers in a randomized, double blind, placebo controlled intervention trial. Age, smoking habits and pretreatment blood levels of cotinine, beta-carotene, retinol and vitamins C and E were similar in the placebo group (n = 73) and the treatment group (n = 70). Plasma beta-carotene levels increased 13-fold in the treatment group during intervention, whereas the other parameters remained stable in both groups. Initial sister chromatid exchange levels were similar in the treatment and placebo groups (5.10 + or - 0.98 vs 5.00 + or - 0.99 sister chromatid exchange/lymphocyte). During the intervention, both groups showed an almost identical decrease, and at the end of the intervention period there was no difference in sister chromatid exchange levels between the treatment and the placebo groups (4.37 + or - 0.38 vs 4.24 + or - 0.37 sister chromatid exchange/lymphocyte). This study shows no protective effect of beta-carotene on DNA damage as reflected by sister chromatid exchanges in lymphocytes. These results thus do not yield support for a cancer preventive mechanism of beta-carotene involving this form of DNA damage. It cannot be excluded, however, that beta-carotene prevents other forms of smoking induced DNA damage, affects other tissues, or is preventive in later stages of carcinogenesis.
Bladder cancer was induced in male B6D2F1 strain mice by the administration of N-butyl-N-(4-hydroxybutyl)nitrosamine. Mice supplemented with beta-carotene for 5 wk before receiving the carcinogen and maintained on beta-carotene for an additional 26 wk developed significantly fewer tumors than did unsupplemented mice. Mice receiving canthaxanthin for the same time period showed no protection against the development of bladder cancer.

A study was made on the effects of long term dietary administration of beta-carotene, vitamin C, vitamin E and selenium, either alone or in combination, on azaserine-induced pancreatic carcinogenesis in rats. Male Wistar rats were given two ip injections of 30 mg azaserine/kg body weight at 19 and 26 days of age. The rats were allocated to eight groups of 40 animals each and were fed an AIN-76 diet rich in saturated fat (20% lard), either as such or after supplementation with beta-carotene, vitamin C, beta-carotene + vitamin C, vitamin E, selenium, vitamin E + selenium, or the combination of all micronutrients investigated. Fifteen months after the last treatment with azaserine the survivors were killed. The pancreata were examined for the number and size of advanced putative preneoplastic lesions and the number of neoplasms as well. Rats maintained on a diet high in either beta-carotene, vitamin C or selenium developed significantly less atypical acinar cells nodules, adenomas and carcinomas as compared to controls. The number of tumor bearing animals was significantly lower in the groups fed the diet high in beta-carotene or selenium. In animals of the group given a diet high in all micronutrients investigated, both the number and incidence of pancreatic tumours was lower than in all other groups. It was concluded that selenium, beta-carotene and vitamin C, alone as well as in combination, have an inhibitory effect on pancreatic carcinogenesis induced in rats by azaserine.

Effects of topically applied betel leaf extract and its constituents, beta-carotene, alphatocopherol, eugenol and hydroxychavicol on 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene induced skin tumors were evaluated in two strains of mice. Betel leaf extract, beta-carotene and alphatocopherol, significantly inhibited the tumor formation by 83, 86, 86% in Swiss mice and 92, 94 and 89% in male Swiss bare mice respectively. Hydroxychavicol showed 90% inhibition in Swiss bare mice at 24 wk of treatment. Eugenol showed minimal protection in both strains of mice. The mean latency period and survivors in betel leaf extract, beta-carotene, alphatocopherol and hydroxychavicol treated groups were remarkably high as compared to 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene alone treated group. Ip injection of betal leaf constituents showed a significant effect on both glutathione and glutathione S-transferase levels in the Swiss mouse skin.

In 14 baboons fed ethanol (50% of total energy) for 2 to 5 yr with a standard amount of beta-carotene (one 200 g carrot/day), levels of beta-carotene were much higher than in controls fed isocaloric carbohydrate, both in plasma (122.5 : 30.9 nmol/dL vs 6.3:1.4 nmol/dL; p< 0.005) and in liver (7.9:1.1 nmol/g vs 1.8:0.5 nmol/g; p< 0.001). Even 20 days after withdrawal of the
carrots, plasma beta-carotene levels remained higher in alcohol fed baboons than in controls (10.1:3.8 nmol/dl vs < 0.1 nmol/dL). Next, the diet was supplemented with beta-carotene beadlets: in four pairs of baboons given a low dose of beta-carotene (3 mg/1,000 kcal), plasma levels were significantly higher in alcohol fed animals than in controls, even when expressed per cholesterol (although the latter increased with alcohol intake). Seven pairs of animals were given a high dose (30 mg/1,000 kcal) of beta-carotene for 1 mo, followed, in four pairs, by 45 mg for another mo. On cessation of beta-carotene treatment, plasma levels decreased more slowly in the alcohol fed baboons than in the controls. Percutaneous liver biopsy specimens revealed that liver concentrations of beta-carotene correlated with plasma levels but were higher in the alcohol fed baboons than in the control baboons, whereas the beta-carotene induced increase in liver retinoids was lower (p< 0.0). Furthermore, the ethanol induced liver depletion of total retinoids (432:103 nmol/g vs 1,711:103 in controls; p< 0.001) was not corrected (637:147 vs 2,404:74; p< 0.001), despite the massive supplementation with beta-carotene. Moreover, in the animals fed alcohol with beta-carotene, multiple ultrastructural lesions appeared, with autophagic vacuoles, abundant myelin figures, degenerated mitochondria and increased blood levels of the mitochondrial enzyme glutamic dehydrogenase. The histological changes were either absent or much less prominent in the baboons given beta-carotene with the control diet or in animals fed the ethanol or control diets without beta-carotene. Thus the combination of an increase in plasma and liver beta-carotene after ethanol and a relative lack of a corresponding rise in retinol suggests interference with the conversion of beta-carotene to vitamin A.


Concurrent use of vitamin E may facilitate absorption and utilization of beta-carotene and may reduce toxicity of vitamin A.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Concurrent use /with cholestyramine, colestipol, mineral oil, or neomycin/ may interfere with the absorption of beta-carotene or vitamin A; requirements for vitamin A may be increased in patients receiving these medications.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Concomitant intake of olestra and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.


Concomitant intake of pectin and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.


Concomitant intake of the carotenoid lutein and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of lutein.


Orlistat may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.

Concomitant intake of mineral oil and beta-carotene may reduce the absorption of beta-carotene.

Concomitant intake of colestipol and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.

/It was/ demonstrated previously that smoke exposure and/or high-dose beta-carotene supplementation decreases levels of retinoic acid and retinoic acid receptor beta (RARbeta) protein, but increase levels of c-Jun and proliferating cellular nuclear antigen protein in the lungs of ferrets. In contrast, low-dose beta-carotene can prevent the decreased lung retinoic acid and the smoke-induced lung lesions. The present study investigated whether smoke exposure and/or beta-carotene supplementation could affect Jun N-terminal kinase (JNK), p38 mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK), and p53 in the lungs of ferrets. Ferrets were subjected to cigarette smoke exposure and either a high or low dose of beta-carotene (2 x 3 factorial design) for 6 mo. There were greater protein levels of phosphorylated JNK, p38, and c-Jun, but lower levels of MAPK phophatase-1 (MKP-1) in groups exposed to smoke and/or high dose beta-carotene. Both phosphorylated-p53 and total p53 were substantially increased in the lungs of these groups. In contrast, low-dose beta-carotene greatly attenuated the smoke-induced phosphorylation of JNK, p38, c-Jun, p53, and total p53, accompanied by upregulated MKP-1. Smoke exposure increased MAPK kinase-4 (MKK4) phosphorylation regardless of beta-carotene supplementation. These data indicate that restoration of retinoic acid and MKP-1 by low-dose beta-carotene in the lungs of ferrets may prevent the smoke-induced activation of the JNK-dependent signaling pathway, p38 MAPK, and the associated phosphorylation of p53, thereby lowering the risk of the smoke-related lung lesions. These data provide supportive evidence that the beneficial vs. detrimental effects of beta-carotene supplementation are related to the dosage of beta-carotene administered.

Deficiencies of vitamin A, iron, and zinc are prevalent in women and infants in developing countries. Supplementation during pregnancy can benefit mother and infant. We examined whether supplementation during pregnancy with iron and folic acid plus beta-carotene or zinc or both improves the micronutrient status of mothers and infants postpartum. Pregnant women (n = 170) were supplemented daily only during pregnancy with beta-carotene (4.5 mg), zinc (30 mg), or both or placebo plus iron (30 mg) and folic acid (0.4 mg) in a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. Micronutrient status was assessed 1 and 6 mo postpartum. Six months postpartum, plasma retinol concentrations were higher in the women who received zinc during pregnancy than in women who did not. Infants born to mothers supplemented with beta-carotene + zinc had higher plasma retinol concentrations, with the frequency of vitamin A deficiency reduced by >30% compared with the other 3 groups. Breast-milk beta-carotene concentrations were higher in all women supplemented with beta-carotene, but breast-milk retinol concentrations were higher only in women who received beta-carotene + zinc. Zinc concentrations did not differ among groups in mothers and infants. /It was concluded that/ Zinc supplementation during pregnancy improved the vitamin A status of mothers and infants postpartum, which indicates a specific role of zinc in vitamin A metabolism. Addition of both
The objectives were to analyze the cardiac effects of exposure to tobacco smoke (ETS), for a period of 30 days, alone and in combination with beta-carotene supplementation (BC). Research methods and procedures: Rats were allocated into: Air (control, n = 13); Air + BC (n = 11); ETS (n = 11); and BC + ETS (n = 9). In Air + BC and BC + ETS, 500 mg of BC were added to the diet. After three months of randomization, cardiac structure and function were assessed by echocardiogram. After that, animals were euthanized and morphological data were analyzed post-mortem. One-way and two-way ANOVA were used to assess the effects of ETS, BC and the interaction between ETS and BC on the variables. ETS presented smaller cardiac output (0.087 + or - 0.001 vs. 0.105 + or - 0.004 l/min; p = 0.007), higher left ventricular diastolic diameter (19.6 + or - 0.5 vs. 18.0 + or - 0.5 mm/kg; p = 0.024), higher left ventricular (2.02 + or - 0.05 vs. 1.70 + or - 0.03 g/kg; p < 0.001) and atrium (0.24 + or - 0.01 vs. 0.19 + or - 0.01 g/kg; p = 0.003) weight, adjusted to body weight of animals, and higher values of hepatic lipid hydroperoxide (5.32 + or - 0.1 vs. 4.84 + or - 0.1 nmol/g tissue; p = 0.031) than Air. However, considering those variables, there were no differences between Air and BC + ETS (0.099 + or - 0.004 l/min; 19.0 + or - 0.5 mm/kg; 1.83 + or - 0.04 g/kg; 0.19 + or - 0.01 g/kg; 4.88 + or - 0.1 nmol/g tissue, respectively; p > 0.05). Ultrastructural alterations were found in ETS: disorganization or loss of myofilaments, plasmatic membrane infolding, sarcoplasm reticulum dilatation, polymorphic mitochondria with swelling and decreased cristae. In BC + ETS, most fibers showed normal morphological aspects. One-month tobacco-smoke exposure induces functional and morphological cardiac alterations and BC supplementation attenuates this ventricular remodeling process.

Pharmacology:

Therapeutic Uses:
Antioxidants
[National Library of Medicine's Medical Subject Headings online file (MeSH, 1999)] **PEER REVIEWED**

THERAPY WITH ORAL BETA-CAROTENE IN PATIENT WITH POLYMORPHOUS LIGHT ERUPTION; COMPLETE REMISSION OCCURRED IN 32% (6/19) TREATED WITH BETA-CAROTENE.
[PARRISH JA ET AL; BR J DERMATOL 100 (2): 187 (1979)] **PEER REVIEWED**

MEDICATION (VET): VITAMIN A PRECURSOR FOR ALL SPECIES EXCEPT CATS.
The effects of chronic oral administration of beta-carotene, a carotenoid partially metabolized to retinol, on plasma lipid concentrations have not been well studied; therefore, 61 subjects were studied over 12 mo while they were enrolled in a skin cancer prevention study in which patients were randomly assigned to receive either placebo (n = 30) or 50 mg beta-carotene/day orally (n = 31). At study entry and 1 yr later, fasting blood samples were obtained for measurement of triglycerides, total cholesterol, high density lipoprotein cholesterol, retinol, and beta-carotene. Retinol concentrations changed minimally in both groups; beta-carotene concentration increased an average of 12.1 + or - 47 nmol/L in the placebo group and 4279 + or - 657 nmol/L in the active treatment group. Both groups experienced similar small increases in triglyceride and total cholesterol concentrations and small decreases in high density lipoprotein cholesterol. Daily oral administration of 50 mg beta-carotene/day did not affect plasma lipid concentrations.


Beta carotene is used to reduce the severity of photosensitivity reactions in patients with erythropoietic protoporphyria. When patients with erythropoietic protoporphyria were phototested with artificial light, beta carotene therapy increased the development time for minimal erythema in nearly all patients. Similarly, most patients with erythropoietic protoporphyria have been able to tolerate exposure to sunlight without discomfort for much longer periods of time during beta carotene therapy. Some patients have been able to remain in the sun all day without experiencing photosensitivity reactions. The protective effect of beta carotene is not total, and each patient must determine his own time limit of exposure to the sun. Patients who respond to beta carotene usually develop enough protection so that they can remain in the sun without discomfort for about the same length of time as normal individuals. After beta carotene therapy is discontinued, patients exhibit decreased tolerance to artificial light and or sunlight, usually returning to pretreatment hypersensitivity.


Beta carotene also has been used with variable success in the management of polymorphous light eruptions and photosensitivity caused by diseases other than erythropoietic protoporphyria. Further studies are required to determine the value of the drug in these conditions. In some patients with polymorphous light eruption, concomitant use of beta carotene and a sunscreen (e.g., aminobenzoic acid, sulisobenzone) may protect against photosensitivity. Beta carotene is not effective as a sunscreen in normal individuals and should not be used for that purpose. A combination preparation containing beta carotene and canthaxanthin has been used orally for cosmetic "tanning" by coloring the skin (carotenodermia).


Beta-carotene may be used for prevention of vitamin A deficiency states in most individuals. Vitamin A deficiency may occur as a result of inadequate nutrition or intestinal malabsorption but does not occur in healthy individuals receiving an adequate balanced diet. For prophylaxis of vitamin A deficiency, dietary improvement, rather than supplementation, is advisable. For treatment of vitamin A deficiency, supplementation with vitamin A is preferred. /Included in
Beta-carotene is used in the prophylaxis and treatment of severe cases of polymorphous light eruption. /NOT included in US product labeling/

Beta-carotene is indicated to reduce the severity of photosensitivity reactions in patients with erythropoietic protoporphyria (EPP). /NOT included in US product labeling/

Vitamin E, beta-carotene, and vitamin C are micronutrient antioxidants that protect cells from oxidative damage involved in prostate carcinogenesis. In separate trials, supplemental vitamin E was associated with a decreased risk of prostate cancer among smokers and supplemental beta-carotene was associated with a decreased risk of prostate cancer among men with low baseline plasma beta-carotene levels. The association between intake of these micronutrient antioxidants from foods and supplements and the risk of prostate cancer among men in the screening arm of the Prostate, Lung, Colorectal, and Ovarian Cancer Screening Trial were evaluated/. At baseline, trial participants completed a 137-item food frequency questionnaire that included detailed questions on 12 individual supplements. Cox proportional hazards models were used to estimate relative risks (RRs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs). All statistical tests were two-sided. 1338 cases of prostate cancer among 29,361 men during up to 8 years of follow-up were identified/. Overall, there was no association between prostate cancer risk and dietary or supplemental intake of vitamin E, beta-carotene, or vitamin C. However, among current and recent (i.e., within the previous 10 years) smokers, decreasing risks of advanced prostate cancer (i.e., Gleason score ≥ 7 or stage III or IV) were associated with increasing dose (RR for > 400 IU/day versus none = 0.29, 95% CI = 0.12 to 0.68; P_trend = .01) and duration (RR for > or ≥ 10 years of use versus none = 0.30, 95% CI = 0.09 to 0.96; P_trend = .01) of supplemental vitamin E use. Supplemental beta-carotene intake at a dose level of at least 2000 microg/day was associated with decreased prostate cancer risk in men with low (below the median of 4129 microg/day) dietary beta-carotene intake (RR = 0.52, 95% CI = 0.33 to 0.81). Among smokers, the age-adjusted rate of advanced prostate cancer was 492 per 100,000 person-years in those who did not take supplemental vitamin E, 153 per 100,000 person-years in those who took more than 400 IU/day of supplemental vitamin E, and 157 per 100,000 person-years in those who took supplemental vitamin E for 10 or more years. Among men with low dietary beta-carotene intake, the age-adjusted rate of prostate cancer was 1122 per 100,000 person-years in those who did not take supplemental beta-carotene, and 623 per 100,000 person-years in those who took at least 2000 microg/day of supplemental beta-carotene. Our results do not provide strong support for population-wide implementation of high-dose antioxidant supplementation for the prevention of prostate cancer. However, vitamin E supplementation in male smokers and beta-carotene supplementation in men with low dietary beta-carotene intakes were associated with reduced risk of this disease.

PubMed Abstract
Drug Warnings:
NOT EFFECTIVE AS SUNSCREEN IN NORMAL INDIVIDUALS & SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE ... USED WITH CAUTION IN PT WITH IMPAIRED RENAL OR HEPATIC FUNCTION BECAUSE SAFE USE ... HAS NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED.

[American Society of Hospital Pharmacists. Data supplied on contract from American Hospital Formulary Service and other current ASHP sources., p. 1976]

**PEER REVIEWED**

Beta carotene is well tolerated. Carotenodermia is usually the only adverse effect. Patients should be forewarned that carotenodermia will develop after 2-6 weeks of therapy, usually first noticed as yellowness of the palms of the hands or soles of the feet and to a lesser extent of the face. Some patients may experience loose stools during beta carotene therapy, but this is sporadic and may not require discontinuance of therapy. Ecchymoses and arthralgia have been reported rarely.


Beta carotene should be used with caution in patients with impaired renal or hepatic function because safe use of the drug in the presence of these conditions has not been established. Although abnormally high blood concentrations of vitamin A do not occur during beta carotene therapy, patients receiving beta carotene should be advised against taking supplementary vitamin A because beta carotene will fulfill normal vitamin A requirements. Patients should be cautioned that large quantities of green or yellow vegetables or their juices or extracts are not suitable substitutes for crystalline beta carotene because consumption of excessive quantities of these vegetables may cause adverse effects such as leukopenia or menstrual disorders. Patients should be warned that the protective effect of beta carotene is not total and that they may still develop considerable burning and edema after sufficient exposure to sunlight. Each patient must establish his own time limit of exposure.


There are no adequate and controlled studies to date in humans. Beta carotene should be used during pregnancy only when the potential benefits justify the possible risks to the fetus. The effect of beta carotene on fertility in humans is not known.


Since it is not known whether beta carotene is distributed into milk, the drug should be used with caution in nursing women.


FDA Pregnancy Risk Category: C /RISK CANNOT BE RULED OUT. Adequate, well controlled human studies are lacking, and animal studies have shown risk to the fetus or are
lacking as well. There is a chance of fetal harm if the drug is given during pregnancy; but the potential benefits may outweigh the potential risk./
[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Yellow discoloration of skin is to be expected; if taking as nutritional supplement, may be a sign that the dose is too high.
[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Data from two large studies indicate an increased incidence of lung cancers when beta-carotene supplements were given to individuals with a history of smoking and/or asbestos exposure; use of beta-carotene supplements in these subgroups is not recommended.
[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

The use of beta-carotene for the treatment of vitamin A deficiency requires medical management.

Smokers should be made aware that supplemental intake of beta-carotene of 20 mg daily or greater were associated with a higher incidence of lung cancer in smokers. Smokers should avoid beta-carotene supplementation pending the establishment of a safe dose for smokers.

Pregnant women and nursing mothers should avoid intakes of beta-carotene greater than 6 mg/day from nutritional supplements.

**Interactions:**
Cigarette smoking is associated with decreased plasma levels of ascorbate and beta-carotene, which indicates that the smoking related chronic inflammatory response leads to an imbalance of oxidant/antioxidant homeostasis and possible predisposition to oxidant inflicted tissue damage and disease.

Weanling male Sprague-Dawley rats were pair-fed beta-carotene (56.5 mg/L of diet) for 8 weeks, with and without ethanol. As expected, ethanol increased CYP2E1 (measured by Western blots) from 67 + or - 8 to 317 + or - 27 densitometric units (p < 0.001). Furthermore, beta-carotene potentiated the ethanol induction to 442 + or - 38 densitometric units (p < 0.01) with a significant interaction (p = 0.012). The rise was confirmed by a corresponding increase in the hydroxylation of p-nitrophenol, a specific substrate for CYP2E1, and by the inhibition with diethyl dithiocarbamate (50 microM). Beta-carotene alone also significantly induced CYP4A1 protein (328 + or - 49 vs. 158 + or - 17 densitometric units, p < 0.05). The corresponding CYP4A1 mRNA (measured by Northern blots) was also increased (p < 0.05) and there was a
significant interaction of the two treatments (p = 0.015). The combination of ethanol and beta-carotene had no significant effect on either total cytochrome P-450 or CYP1A1/2, CYP2B, CYP3A, and CYP4A2/3 contents. Beta-carotene potentiates the CYP2E1 induction by ethanol in rat liver and also increases CYP4A1, which may, at least in part, explain the associated hepatotoxicity.


AFLATOXIN B1 (4 MG/KG/DAY, ORALLY) ADMIN TO RATS FOR 26 DAYS INHIBITED THE FORMATION OF VITAMIN A FROM BETA-CAROTENE IN THE INTESTINAL MUCOSA.

[HIKARAISHI S; KANAGAWA KENRITSU EIYO TANKI DAIGAKU KIYO 9: 20 (1977)] **PEER REVIEWED**

SULFITE-MEDIATED BETA-CAROTENE DESTRUCTION WAS INVESTIGATED; IT WAS INHIBITED BY ALPHA-TOCOPHEROL, 1,2-DIHYDROXYBENZENE-3,5-DISULFONIC ACID & BUTYLATED HYDROXYTOLUENE

[PEISER GD, YANG SF; J AGRIC FOOD CHEM 27 (2): 446 (1979)] **PEER REVIEWED**

SENCAR mice were used to determine the effects of the provitamin A compound beta-carotene on papilloma formation and the conversion of papillomas to carcinomas in a two stage protocol with one application of the initiator 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene (20 ug) and 20 weekly applications of the promotor 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate (2 ug). A purified vitamin A-free diet was supplemented with beta-carotene at four levels (0.6, 6, 60 and 600 ug/g of diet) for female mice and two levels (60 and 600 ug/g) for male mice. Dietary supplementations of beta-carotene did not result in significant changes in body weight and survival of female and male mice. However, papillomas developed more rapidly and papilloma incidence (% mice with papillomas) reached its maximum (100%) sooner in male mice fed 600 ug of beta-carotene/g of diet than those fed 60 ug/g. There were smaller differences in papilloma incidence among the dietary groups in female mice, but the papilloma incidence again reached 100% sooner in mice fed 600 ug of beta-carotene/g of diet. Female and male mice fed 600 ug of beta-carotene/g of diet had significantly higher papilloma yields (average number of papillomas/mouse) than other dietary groups and a very low percentage of these papillomas converted to carcinomas in these mice. Thus, beta-carotene at 600 ug/g inhibited the conversion of papillomas to carcinomas in both sexes. In addition, papilloma yields were higher in female mice and these papillomas regressed more quickly than those in the corresponding groups of male mice. In conclusion, dietary beta-carotene caused differential effects on papilloma and carcinoma yields and sex-dependent differences in papilloma formation in female and male SENCAR mice treated with 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene and 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate in a two-stage carcinogenesis protocol.

[Chen LC et al; Carcinogenesis 14 (4): 713-7 (1993)] **PEER REVIEWED** PubMed Abstract

Preventive effects of artificial beta-carotene on the development of rat mammary gland adenocarcinomas induced by 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene were studied in rats maintained on a diet containing beta-carotene at a dose of 2.5 mg/animal within 10 wk, which was initiated after the carcinogen administration. The carotenoid treatment course caused the following effects: manifestation of adenocarcinomas induced by 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene was
The antitumor-promoting activity of alpha-carotene was also compared with that of beta-carotene against two stage mouse lung carcinogenesis (initiator, 4-nitroquinoline 1-oxide; promoter, glycerol). Alpha-Carotene, but not beta-carotene, reduced the number of lung tumors per mouse to about 30% of that in the control group (p< 0.001, Student's t test). The higher potency of the antitumor promoting action of alpha-carotene compared to beta-carotene was confirmed in other experimental systems; eg, alpha-carotene was also found to have a stronger effect than beta-carotene in suppressing the promoting activity of 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate on skin carcinogenesis in 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene initiated mice.  


The inhibitory effects of beta-carotene on cyclophosphamide induced chromosomal aberrations in mouse bone marrow cells were investigated. Male Balb C mice, 8-10 wk old, were treated with beta-carotene (0.5, 1.0, 2.0, 5.0, 10, 25, 50, 100, and 200 mg/kg) or with corn oil (0.05 ml/10 g body weight) by gavage for 5 consecutive days. Four hr after the last treatment with or without beta-carotene, the animals were ip injected with cyclophosphamide and killed 24 hr later for cytological preparations and analysis. The results obtained show that beta-carotene provides significant protection against the clastogenicity of cyclophosphamide. The maximum reduction in the frequency of aberrant metaphases (26.9%) and in total number of chromosomal aberrations were observed when beta-carotene was used at 50 mg/kg. Nevertheless, no direct dose response relationship was detected, suggesting that beta-carotene might act through different mechanisms at different doses.  

[Murakoshi M et al; Cancer Res 52 (23): 6583-7 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED**  

Of the several models for lung carcinogenesis, two appear appropriate for chemoprevention studies based upon dose response, tumor type, and tumor localization. One model utilizes the direct-acting carcinogen methyl-nitrosourea, and the other utilizes a carcinogen (diethylnitrosamine) requiring metabolic activation. Tumors appear rapidly in both models (within 6 months), and the model systems are responsive to modulation by several classes of potential chemopreventive agents. For example, the retinoid N-(4-hydroxyphenyl) retinamide reduces the incidence of lung adenosquamous carcinoma, but retinol or beta-carotene are ineffective when administered alone. However, concomitant administration of these compounds reduces the incidence of non-neoplastic dysplasias as well as adenosquamous carcinomas of the lung. In the methyl-nitrosourea system, retinoids in general have been ineffective in reducing the incidence of tracheobronchial squamous cell carcinomas.  

[Moon RC et al; Monogr Nat1 Cancer Inst 13: 45-9 (1992)] **PEER REVIEWED**

The putative cancer preventive potential of beta-carotene may be explained by its antioxidant capacity to prevent free radical induced DNA damage. To evaluate this hypothesis, the effect of 14 wk of beta-carotene supplementation on the frequency of sister chromatid exchanges in lymphocytes was studied in 143 heavy smokers in a randomized, double blind, placebo controlled intervention trial. Age, smoking habits and pretreatment blood levels of cotinine, beta-
carotene, retinol and vitamins C and E were similar in the placebo group (n = 73) and the treatment group (n = 70). Plasma beta-carotene levels increased 13-fold in the treatment group during intervention, whereas the other parameters remained stable in both groups. Initial sister chromatid exchange levels were similar in the treatment and placebo groups (5.10 ± 0.98 vs 5.00 ± 0.99 sister chromatid exchange/lymphocyte). During the intervention, both groups showed an almost identical decrease, and at the end of the intervention period there was no difference in sister chromatid exchange levels between the treatment and the placebo groups (4.37 ± 0.38 vs 4.24 ± 0.37 sister chromatid exchange/lymphocyte). This study shows no protective effect of beta-carotene on DNA damage as reflected by sister chromatid exchanges in lymphocytes. These results thus do not yield support for a cancer preventive mechanism of beta-carotene involving this form of DNA damage. It cannot be excluded, however, that beta-carotene prevents other forms of smoking induced DNA damage, affects other tissues, or is preventive in later stages of carcinogenesis.

PubMed Abstract

Bladder cancer was induced in male B6D2F1 strain mice by the administration of N-butyl-N-(4-hydroxybutyl)nitrosamine. Mice supplemented with beta-carotene for 5 wk before receiving the carcinogen and maintained on beta-carotene for an additional 26 wk developed significantly fewer tumors than did unsupplemented mice. Mice receiving canthaxanthin for the same time period showed no protection against the development of bladder cancer.

[Mathews-Roth MM et al; Oncology 48 (3): 177-9 (1991)] **PEER REVIEWED**
PubMed Abstract

A study was made on the effects of long term dietary administration of beta-carotene, vitamin C, vitamin E and selenium, either alone or in combination, on azaserine-induced pancreatic carcinogenesis in rats. Male Wistar rats were given two ip injections of 30 mg azaserine/kg body weight at 19 and 26 days of age. The rats were allocated to eight groups of 40 animals each and were fed an AIN-76 diet rich in saturated fat (20% lard), either as such or after supplementation with beta-carotene, vitamin C, beta-carotene + vitamin C, vitamin E, selenium, vitamin E + selenium, or the combination of all micronutrients investigated. Fifteen months after the last treatment with azaserine the survivors were killed. The pancreata were examined for the number and size of advanced putative preneoplastic lesions and the number of neoplasms as well. Rats maintained on a diet high in either beta-carotene, vitamin C or selenium developed significantly less atypical acinar cells nodules, adenomas and carcinomas as compared to controls. The number of tumor bearing animals was significantly lower in the groups fed the diet high in beta-carotene or selenium. In animals of the group given a diet high in all micronutrients investigated, both the number and incidence of pancreatic tumours was lower than in all other groups. It was concluded that selenium, beta-carotene and vitamin C, alone as well as in combination, have an inhibitory effect on pancreatic carcinogenesis induced in rats by azaserine.

PubMed Abstract

Effects of topically applied betel leaf extract and its constituents, beta-carotene, alphatocopherol, eugenol and hydroxychavicol on 7,12-dimethylbenz(a)anthracene induced skin tumors were evaluated in two strains of mice. Betel leaf extract, beta-carotene and alphatocopherol, significantly inhibited the tumor formation by 83, 86, 86% in Swiss mice and 92, 94 and 89% in male Swiss bare mice respectively. Hydroxychavicol showed 90% inhibition in
Swiss bare mice at 24 wk of treatment. Eugenol showed minimal protection in both strains of 
mice. The mean latency period and survivors in betel leaf extract, beta-carotene, alpha-
tocopherol and hydroxychavicol treated groups were remarkably high as compared to 7,12-
dimethylbenz(a)anthracene alone treated group. Ip injection of betel leaf constituents showed a 
significant effect on both glutathione and glutathione S-transferase levels in the Swiss mouse 
PubMed Abstract

In 14 baboons fed ethanol (50% of total energy) for 2 to 5 yr with a standard amount of beta-
carotene (one 200 g carrot/day), levels of beta-carotene were much higher than in controls fed 
isocaloric carbohydrate, both in plasma (122.5 : 30.9 nmol/dL vs 6.3:1.4 nmol/dL; p< 0.005) and 
in liver (7.9:1.1 nmol/g vs 1.8:0.5 nmol/g; p< 0.001). Even 20 days after withdrawal of the 
carrots, plasma beta-carotene levels remained higher in alcohol fed baboons than in controls 
(10.1:3.8 nmol/dl vs < 0.1 nmol/dL). Next, the diet was supplemented with beta-carotene 
beadlets: in four pairs of baboons given a low dose of beta-carotene (3 mg/1,000 kcal), plasma 
levels were significantly higher in alcohol fed animals than in controls, even when expressed per 
cholesterol (although the latter increased with alcohol intake). Seven pairs of animals were given 
a high dose (30 mg/1,000 kcal) of beta-carotene for 1 mo, followed, in four pairs, by 45 mg for 
another mo. On cessation of beta-carotene treatment, plasma levels decreased more slowly in the 
alcohol fed baboons than in the controls. Percutaneous liver biopsy specimens revealed that liver 
concentrations of beta-carotene correlated with plasma levels but were higher in the alcohol fed 
baboons than in the control baboons, whereas the beta-carotene induced increase in liver 
retinoids was lower (p< 0.0). Furthermore, the ethanol induced liver depletion of total retinoids 
(432:103 nmol/g vs 1,711:103 in controls; p< 0.001) was not corrected (637:147 vs 2,404:74; p< 
0.001), despite the massive supplementation with beta-carotene. Moreover, in the animals fed 
酒anol with beta-carotene, multiple ultrastructural lesions appeared, with autophagic vacuoles, 
abundant myelin figures, degenerated mitochondria and increased blood levels of the 
mitochondrial enzyme glutamic dehydrogenase. The histological changes were either absent or 
much less prominent in the baboons given beta-carotene with the control diet or in animals fed 
the ethanol or control diets without beta-carotene. Thus the combination of an increase in plasma 
and liver beta-carotene after ethanol and a relative lack of a corresponding rise in retinol suggests 
interference with the conversion of beta-carotene to vitamin A. 
Abstract

Concurrent use of vitamin E may facilitate absorption and utilization of beta-carotene and may 
reduce toxicity of vitamin A. 
[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. 
Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Concurrent use /with cholestyramine, colestipol, mineral oil, or neomycin/ may interfere with the 
absorption of beta-carotene or vitamin A; requirements for vitamin A may be increased in 
patients receiving these medications. 
[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. 
Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.] **PEER REVIEWED**

Concomitant intake of olestra and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.
Concomitant intake of pectin and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.

Concomitant intake of the carotenoid lutein and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of lutein.

Orlistat may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.

Concomitant intake of mineral oil and beta-carotene may reduce the absorption of beta-carotene.

Concomitant intake of colestipol and beta-carotene may decrease the absorption of beta-carotene.

/It was/ demonstrated previously that smoke exposure and/or high-dose beta-carotene supplementation decreases levels of retinoic acid and retinoic acid receptor beta (RARbeta) protein, but increase levels of c-Jun and proliferating cellular nuclear antigen protein in the lungs of ferrets. In contrast, low-dose beta-carotene can prevent the decreased lung retinoic acid and the smoke-induced lung lesions. The present study investigated whether smoke exposure and/or beta-carotene supplementation could affect Jun N-terminal kinase (JNK), p38 mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK), and p53 in the lungs of ferrets. Ferrets were subjected to cigarette smoke exposure and either a high or low dose of beta-carotene (2 x 3 factorial design) for 6 mo. There were greater protein levels of phosphorylated JNK, p38, and c-Jun, but lower levels of MAPK phophatase-1 (MKP-1) in groups exposed to smoke and/or high dose beta-carotene. Both phosphorylated-p53 and total p53 were substantially increased in the lungs of these groups. In contrast, low-dose beta-carotene greatly attenuated the smoke-induced phosphorylation of JNK, p38, c-Jun, p53, and total p53, accompanied by upregulated MKP-1. Smoke exposure increased MAPK kinase-4 (MKK4) phosphorylation regardless of beta-carotene supplementation. These data indicate that restoration of retinoic acid and MKP-1 by low-dose beta-carotene in the lungs of ferrets may prevent the smoke-induced activation of the JNK-dependent signaling pathway, p38 MAPK, and the associated phosphorylation of p53, thereby lowering the risk of the smoke-related lung lesions. These data provide supportive evidence that the beneficial vs. detrimental effects of beta-carotene supplementation are related to the dosage of beta-carotene administered.

Deficiencies of vitamin A, iron, and zinc are prevalent in women and infants in developing countries. Supplementation during pregnancy can benefit mother and infant. We examined whether supplementation during pregnancy with iron and folic acid plus beta-carotene or zinc or...
both improves the micronutrient status of mothers and infants postpartum. Pregnant women (n = 170) were supplemented daily only during pregnancy with beta-carotene (4.5 mg), zinc (30 mg), or both or placebo plus iron (30 mg) and folic acid (0.4 mg) in a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. Micronutrient status was assessed 1 and 6 mo postpartum. Six months postpartum, plasma retinol concentrations were higher in the women who received zinc during pregnancy than in women who did not. Infants born to mothers supplemented with beta-carotene + zinc had higher plasma retinol concentrations, with the frequency of vitamin A deficiency reduced by >30% compared with the other 3 groups. Breast-milk beta-carotene concentrations were higher in all women supplemented with beta-carotene, but breast-milk retinol concentrations were higher only in women who received beta-carotene + zinc. Zinc concentrations did not differ among groups in mothers and infants. /It was concluded that/ Zinc supplementation during pregnancy improved the vitamin A status of mothers and infants postpartum, which indicates a specific role of zinc in vitamin A metabolism. Addition of both beta-carotene and zinc to iron supplements during pregnancy could be effective in improving the vitamin A status of mothers and infants.


The objectives were to analyze the cardiac effects of exposure to tobacco smoke (ETS), for a period of 30 days, alone and in combination with beta-carotene supplementation (BC). Research methods and procedures: Rats were allocated into: Air (control, n = 13); Air + BC (n = 11); ETS (n = 11); and BC + ETS (n = 9). In Air + BC and BC + ETS, 500 mg of BC were added to the diet. After three months of randomization, cardiac structure and function were assessed by echocardiogram. After that, animals were euthanized and morphological data were analyzed post-mortem. One-way and two-way ANOVA were used to assess the effects of ETS, BC and the interaction between ETS and BC on the variables. ETS presented smaller cardiac output (0.087 + or - 0.001 vs. 0.105 + or - 0.004 l/min; p = 0.007), higher left ventricular diastolic diameter (19.6 + or - 0.5 vs. 18.0 + or - 0.5 mm/kg; p = 0.024), higher left ventricular (2.02 + or - 0.05 vs. 1.70 + or - 0.03 g/kg; p < 0.001) and atrium (0.24 + or - 0.01 vs. 0.19 + or - 0.01 g/kg; p = 0.003) weight, adjusted to body weight of animals, and higher values of hepatic lipid hydroperoxide (5.32 + or - 0.1 vs. 4.84 + or - 0.1 nmol/g tissue; p = 0.031) than Air. However, considering those variables, there were no differences between Air and BC + ETS (0.099 + or - 0.004 l/min; 19.0 + or - 0.5 mm/kg; 1.83 + or - 0.04 g/kg; 0.19 + or - 0.01 g/kg; 4.88 + or - 0.1 nmol/g tissue, respectively; p > 0.05). Ultrastructural alterations were found in ETS: disorganization or loss of myofilaments, plasmatic membrane infolding, sarcoplasm reticulum dilatation, polymorphic mitochondria with swelling and decreased cristae. In BC + ETS, most fibers showed normal morphological aspects. One-month tobacco-smoke exposure induces functional and morphological cardiac alterations and BC supplementation attenuates this ventricular remodeling process.


Bioncessity:
Beta-carotene is a precursor to vitamin A, which is essential for normal function of the retina; in the form of retinal, it combines with opsin (red pigment in the retina) to form rhodopsin (visual purple), which is necessary for visual adaptation to darkness. It is also necessary for growth of
bone, testicular and ovarian function, and embryonic development, and for regulation of growth and differentiation of epithelial tissues.

[Thomson/Micromedex. Drug Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, Greenwood Village, CO. 2006.]* **PEER REVIEWED**

Of 600 carotenoids from natural sources that have been characterized, fewer than 10% serve as precursors of vitamin A. Many dietary carotenoids, both with and without provitamin A activity, are found in the blood and tissues of humans. beta-Carotene, the most nutritionally active carotenoid, comprises 15-30% of total serum carotenoids. Vitamin A is formed primarily by the oxygen-dependent central cleavage of beta-carotene and other provitamin A carotenoids.

[Bendich A, Olson JA; FASEB J 3 (8): 1927-32 (1989)] **PEER REVIEWED**

**Environmental Fate & Exposure:**

**Natural Pollution Sources:**
ORANGE-YELLOW PIGMENT IN PLANTS, ALGAE, & SOME MARINE ANIMALS, ESP IN LEAVES, VEGETATION, & ROOT CROPS, IN TRACE CONCN. NOTABLY PRESENT IN BUTTER & CARROTS. /CAROTENE/

RICHEST SOURCES OF CAROTENE ARE YELLOW & GREEN (LEAFY) VEGETABLES & YELLOW FRUITS.

**Milk Concentrations:**
EXPERIMENTAL: This study investigated milk carotenoid concentrations during days 4-32 postpartum and assessed the effects of maternal beta-carotene supplementation. Subjects (n = 21; aged 19-39 y) were randomly assigned to receive beta-carotene (30 mg/d) or placebo from days 4 to 32 postpartum. Each subject provided 8 diet records and 8 milk samples during the study. Diet records were analyzed for energy, macronutrients, vitamins A and E, and carotenoids. Milk samples were analyzed with HPLC for concentrations of carotenoids, retinol, and alpha-tocopherol. Data were analyzed by using repeated-measures analysis and orthogonal contrasts. No significant differences in average dietary intakes, body mass index, age, or parity were found between groups at baseline or after supplementation. Milk carotenoid concentrations decreased over time (P < 0.01), as did retinol and alpha-tocopherol concentrations (P < 0.003).

Concentrations of most carotenoids decreased to those reported for mature milk by day 32 postpartum. Milk lutein concentrations remained elevated throughout the study compared with values reported for mature milk, whereas plasma lutein concentrations decreased significantly over time. beta-carotene supplementation did not significantly change the milk concentrations of beta-carotene, the other carotenoids, retinol, or alpha-tocopherol. CONCLUSIONS: The lack of increase in milk beta-carotene despite supplementation suggests that transitional milk may be
already nearly saturated with beta-carotene. The elevated milk lutein concentration and simultaneous decrease in plasma lutein suggest that lutein metabolism may be altered during early lactation.


PubMed Abstract

Environmental Standards & Regulations:

**FDA Requirements:**
Certification of this color additive when used as a food is not necessary for the protection of the public health and therefore batches thereof are exempt from the requirements of section 706(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.


Certification of this color additive when used as a drug is not necessary for the protection of the public health and therefore batches thereof are exempt from the requirements of section 706(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.


Certification of this color additive when used as a cosmetic is not necessary for the protection of the public health and therefore batches thereof are exempt from the requirements of section 706(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.


Substance added directly to human food affirmed as generally recognized as safe (GRAS).


Beta-Carotene used as a nutrient and/or dietary supplement in animal drugs, feeds, and related products is generally recognized as safe when used in accordance with good manufacturing or feeding practice.


The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is issuing an interim final rule to prohibit the use on foods of a claim relating to the relationship between antioxidant vitamin A and beta-carotene and the risk in adults of atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease, and certain cancers. This interim final rule is in response to a notification of a health claim submitted under section 303 of the FDA Modernization Act of 1997 (FDAMA). FDA has reviewed statements that the petitioner
submitted in that notification, and in conformity with the requirements of FDAMA, the agency is prohibiting the claim because the statements submitted as the basis of the claim are not "authoritative statements" of a scientific body, as required by FDAMA; therefore, section 303 of FDAMA does not authorize use of this claim. As provided for in section 301 of FDAMA, this interim final rule is effective immediately upon publication.

[63 FR 34092 (6/22/1998)] **PEER REVIEWED**


[DHHS/FDA; Electronic Orange Book-Approved Drug Products with Therapeutic Equivalence Evaluations. Available from, as of November 15, 2006: http://www.fda.gov/cder/ob/ **PEER REVIEWED**

Chemical/Physical Properties:

Molecular Formula:
C₄₀H₅₆

Molecular Weight:
536.87

Color/Form:
Deep purple, hexagonal prisms from benzene and methanol

Red, rhombic, almost square leaflets from petroleum ether; dil soln are yellow

CRYSTALLINE FORM APPEARS DEEP ORANGE OR COPPER-COLORED

Red-brown hexagonal prisms from benzene and methanol
Melting Point:
183 deg C (evacuated tube)

Density/ Specific Gravity:
1.00 at 20 deg C/20 deg C

Octanol/Water Partition Coefficient:
log Kow = 17.62 (est)

Solubilities:
Sol in benzene, chloroform, carbon disulfide; moderately sol in ether, petroleum ether, oils; 100 ml hexane dissolve 109 mg at 0 deg C; very sparingly sol in methanol and ethanol; practically insol in water, acids, alkalies

Soluble in acetone

Soluble in vegetable oils

Insoluble in ethanol, glycerol, propylene glycol; slightly soluble in boiling organic solvents such as ether (0.05%), benzene (0.2%), carbon disulfide (1%), methylene chloride (0.5%); solubility in edible oils 0.08% at room temperature, 0.2% at 60 deg C and 0.8% at 100 deg C.
Solubility: 3 mg/L in methyl Cellosolve; 2 mg/L in ethanol
[Green FJ; The Sigma-Aldrich Handbook of Stains, Dyes and Indicators, Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc, Milwaukee, WI, p. 194 (1991)] **PEER REVIEWED**

In water, 0.6 mg/L, temp not specified
[Green FJ; The Sigma-Aldrich Handbook of Stains, Dyes and Indicators, Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc, Milwaukee, WI, p. 194 (1991)] **PEER REVIEWED**

Spectral Properties:
Max absorption (chloroform): 497, 466 nm

MAX ABSORPTION (BENZENE): 278 NM (LOG E= 4.30), 364 NM (LOG E= 4.62), 463 NM (LOG E= 4.71), 494 NM (LOG E= 4.77)

Max Absorption: 456, 484 nm (E=2500, 2200)(in ethanol)

IR: 11591 (Sadtrler Research Laboratories Prism Collection)


MASS: 280 (Aldermaston, Eight Peak Index of Mass Spectra, UK); 68285 (NIST/EPA/MSDC Mass Spectral database, 1990 version

Vapor Pressure:
1.8X10-11 mm Hg at 25 deg C (est)
Other Chemical/Physical Properties:
Sensitive to alkali and very sensitive to air and light, particularly at high temperatures.

IR: 21933 (Sadtrler Research Laboratories Prism Collection) /Alpha-carotene/  

UV: 7-1258 (Organic Electronic Spectral Data, Phillips et al, John Wiley & Sons, New York) /Alpha-carotene/  

MASS: 280 (Aldermaston, Eight Peak Index of Mass Spectra, UK) /Alpha-carotene/  


MASS: 280 (Aldermaston, Eight Peak Index of Mass Spectra, UK) /Gamma-carotene/  

Henry's Law constant = 1.1X10+2 atm-cu m/mol at 25 deg C (est)  

Hydroxyl radical reaction rate constant = 7.4X10-10 cu cm/molec-sec at 25 deg C (est)  

Chemical Safety & Handling:

Stability/Shelf Life:  
ABSORBS OXYGEN FROM AIR GIVING RISE TO INACTIVE, COLORLESS OXIDATION PRODUCTS
Storage Conditions:
Store below 40 deg C (104 deg F), preferably between 15 and 30 deg C (59 and 86 deg F), unless otherwise specified by manufacturer.

Disposal Methods:
SRP: At the time of review, criteria for land treatment or burial (sanitary landfill) disposal practices are subject to significant revision. Prior to implementing land disposal of waste residue (including waste sludge), consult with environmental regulatory agencies for guidance on acceptable disposal practices.

Occupational Exposure Standards:

Manufacturing/Use Information:

Major Uses:
Yellow coloring agent for foods.

MEDICATION  (See also: Therapeutic Uses)

Therapeutic Category: Vitamine A precursor. Ultraviolet screen.

Therapeutic Category (Vet): Vitamin A precursor for all species except cats.

Manufacturers:
Atomergic Chemetics Corp., 71 Carolyn Blvd., Farmingdale, NY 11735-1527, (631)694-9000; Prodn site: Farmingdale, NY
Methods of Manufacturing:

Beta-Carotene is made by a microbial fermentation process from corn and soybean oil.

General Manufacturing Information:

Most important of provitamins A. Widely distributed in plant & animal kingdom. In plants it occurs almost always together with chlorophyll. Commercial crystalline beta-carotene has a Vit A activity of 1.67 million USP units/g. The IU of 0.6 ug beta-carotene is almost exactly equiv to 0.3 ug Vit A.

One IU of vitamin A is specific biological activity of 0.3 ug of all-trans-retinol or 0.6 ug of beta-carotene. Because of relatively inefficient dietary utilization of beta-carotene compared with retinol, nomenclature is in the terms of retinol equivalents, which represents 1 ug of all-trans-retinol, 6 ug of dietary beta-carotene, or 12 ug of other provitamin A carotenoids.

... consists of 3 isomers, approx 15% alpha, 85% beta, & 0.1% gamma.

Theoretically one molecule of beta-carotene should yield two molecules of Vit A1; however, availability of carotene in foods as sources of Vit A for humans is low & extremely variable. Utilization efficiency of carotene is generally considered to be 1/6 for humans...
IN US, AVG ADULT RECEIVES ABOUT HALF OF HIS DAILY INTAKE OF VITAMIN A AS CAROTENOIDS. /CAROTENOIDS/

Beta carotene is a precursor of vitamin A that is present in green and yellow vegetables, Although beta carotene has 20 cis-trans isomers, it occurs in nature mainly as the all-trans isomer, and the commercially available synthetic drug consists of the all-trans isomer. trans-beta-Carotene occurs as red or reddish brown to violet-brown crystals or crystalline powder and is insoluble in water, practically insoluble in alcohol, and sparingly soluble in vegetable oils.

Formulations/Preparations:
Beta-carotene supplements are available as synthetic beta-carotene and natural beta-carotene.
Synthetic beta-carotene is comprised mainly of all-trans beta-carotene with small amounts of 13-cis beta-carotene and even smaller amounts of 9-cis beta-carotene. Natural beta-carotene is principally derived from the algae Dunaliella salina and is comprised of all-trans beta-carotene and 9-cis beta-carotene. Three mg of beta-carotene is equal to 5,000 UIs. Supplemental intake of beta-carotene ranges from 3-15 mg/day.

GRADES: ACCORDING TO USP, UNITS OF VIT A, SOLD AS PURE CRYSTALS, AS SOLN IN VARIOUS OILS, AS COLLOIDAL DISPERSION. ALSO 'FOOD CHEMICAL CODEX' /CAROTENE/

Oral: Capsules: 15 mg, 60 mg (available by nonproprietary name).

Laboratory Methods:

Clinical Laboratory Methods:
Simultaneous quantitation and separation of carotenoids and retinol in human milk by HPLC.

Determination of retinol, alpha-tocopherol, and beta-carotene in serum by liquid chromatography.
Analytic Laboratory Methods:
CHROMATOGRAPHY TO DETECT CAROTENOIDS ADDED FOR COLORING PURPOSES, IN MACARONI, NOODLES, FLOUR, SEMOLINA, & EGG YOLK.
/CAROTENES/


Method: AOAC 941.15; Procedure: spectrophotometric method; Analyte: carotene; Matrix: fresh plant materials and silages; Detection Limit: not provided.


Determination of alpha- and beta-carotene in some raw fruits and vegetables by HPLC.
[Bushway RJ; J Agric Food Chem 34 (3): 409-12 (1986)] **PEER REVIEWED**

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (serum); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 450 nm; limit of detection: 10 ng/mL

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (plasma, serum); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 460 nm

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (serum); procedure: isocratic high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 325 nm, 291 nm, and 450 nm; limit of detection: 50 nM

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (plasma); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 470 nm

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (plasma, serum); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 340 nm, 290 nm, 280 nm, and 450 nm; limit of detection: 100 ng/mL
Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (serum); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 450 nm; limit of detection: 1 ng

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: blood (plasma), tissue (liver, lung); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 445 nm; limit of detection: 10 ng/mL

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: food (cheese); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 450 nm; limit of detection: 0.16 ng

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: food (margarine); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 436 nm

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: food (squash, peach, orange juice, palm tree oil); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 450 nm; limit of detection: 0.16 ng

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: food (squash, broccoli, carrots, collard greens, turnip, kale, mustard greens, zucchini); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 450 nm

Analyte: beta-carotene; matrix: food (carrots, tomatoes, pumpkins); procedure: high-performance liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection at 450 nm
Special References:

Special Reports:
Bendich A; The Safety of beta-Carotene. Nutr Cancer 11 (4): 207-14 (1988). Epidemiological studies have associated low dietary and/or plasma level of carotenoids with higher incidences of certain cancers. This evidence has led the NCI to initiate more than a dozen prospective clinical trials in which supplements of beta-carotene alone, or in combination with other micronutrients, are being taken.


Synonyms and Identifiers:

Related HSDB Records:
815 [VITAMIN A]

Synonyms:
ALL-TRANS-BETA-CAROTENE
**PEER REVIEWED**

Carotaben
**PEER REVIEWED**

BETA,BETA-CAROTENE
**PEER REVIEWED**

BETA-CAROTENE, ALL-TRANS-
**PEER REVIEWED**

CYCLOHEXENE, 1,1'-(3,7,12,16-TETRAMETHYL-1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15,17-OCTADECANONAENE-1,18-DIYL)BIS(2,6,6-TRIMETHYL-, (ALL-E)-
**PEER REVIEWED**

Provatene
**PEER REVIEWED**

PROVITAMIN A
**PEER REVIEWED**

Solatene
**PEER REVIEWED**

SOLATENE (CAPS)
**PEER REVIEWED**
Associated Chemicals:
Alpha-carotene; 7488-99-5
Gamma-carotene; 472-93-5

Formulations/Preparations:
Beta-carotene supplements are available as synthetic beta-carotene and natural beta-carotene. Synthetic beta-carotene is comprised mainly of all-trans beta-carotene with small amounts of 13-cis beta-carotene and even smaller amounts of 9-cis beta-carotene. Natural beta-carotene is principally derived from the algae Dunaliella salina and is comprised of all-trans beta-carotene and 9-cis beta-carotene. Three mg of beta-carotene is equal to 5,000 Uls. Supplemental intake of beta-carotene ranges from 3-15 mg/day.

GRADEx: ACCORDING TO USP, UNITS OF VIT A, SOLD AS PURE CRYSTALS, AS SOLN IN VARIOUS OILS, AS COLLOIDAL DISPERSION. ALSO 'FOOD CHEMICAL CODEX' /CAROTENE/

Oral: Capsules: 15 mg, 60 mg (available by nonproprietary name).

Administrative Information:

Hazardous Substances Databank Number: 3264

Last Revision Date: 20070604

Last Review Date: Reviewed by SRP on 1/11/2007

Update History:
Complete Update on 2007-06-04, 29 fields added/edited/deleted
Complete Update on 05/13/2002, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 01/14/2002, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 09/12/2000, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 02/02/2000, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 09/21/1999, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 08/27/1999, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 05/11/1999, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 06/02/1998, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 03/13/1998, 4 fields added/edited/deleted.
Field Update on 10/26/1997, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Field Update on 05/01/1997, 2 fields added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 05/11/1996, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 01/26/1996, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 05/26/1995, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 03/09/1995, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 12/30/1994, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 05/12/1994, 35 fields added/edited/deleted.
Field Update on 11/01/1993, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 01/20/1993, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Field update on 12/29/1992, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Field update on 11/09/1990, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 10/10/1990, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 04/16/1990, 3 fields added/edited/deleted.
Field update on 12/29/1989, 1 field added/edited/deleted.
Complete Update on 01/04/1985
Created 19830315 by GCF
Review

Carotenoids: Actual knowledge on food sources, intakes, stability and bioavailability and their protective role in humans

Giuseppe Maiani1, María Jesús Periago Castón2, Giovina Catasta1, Elisabetta Toti1, Isabel Goñi Cambrodó2, Anette Bysted4, Fernando Granado-Lorencio5, Begoña Olmedilla-Alonso6, Pia Knuthsen4, Massimo Valoti7, Volker Böhm8, Esther Mayer-Miebach9, Diana Behsnilian9 and Ulrich Schlemmer10

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6 Departamento de Metabolismo y Nutrición, Instituto del Frío, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, Spain
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8 Institute of Nutrition, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Jena, Germany
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10 Federal Research Centre for Nutrition, Institute of Nutritional Physiology, Karlsruhe, Germany

Carotenoids are one of the major food micronutrients in human diets and the overall objective of this review is to re-examine the role of carotenoids in human nutrition. We have emphasized the attention on the following carotenoids present in food and human tissues: \( \beta \)-carotene, \( \alpha \)-cryptoxanthin, \( \alpha \)-carotene, lycopene, lutein and zeaxanthin; we have reported the major food sources and dietary intake of these compounds. We have tried to summarize positive and negative effects of food processing, storage, cooking on carotenoid content and carotenoid bioavailability. In particular, we have evidenced the possibility to improve carotenoids bioavailability in accordance with changes and variations of technology procedures.

Keywords: Bioavailability / Carotenoids / Epidemiological studies / Food source / Technology process

Received: February 5, 2008; revised: May 27, 2008; accepted: May 29, 2008

1 Introduction

Carotenoids are a widespread group of naturally occurring fat-soluble pigments. They are especially abundant in yellow-orange fruits and vegetables and in dark green, leafy vegetables. In plant cells, carotenoids are mainly present in lipid membranes or stored in plasma vacuoles [1, 2].

Literature reports on the various aspects of the biosynthesis of carotenoids and the changes in their accumulation in plants through genetic and environmental factors. Food carotenoids have been compiled in several tables and databases, generally including provitamin A carotenoids such as \( \beta \)-carotene and \( \beta \)-cryptoxanthin, as well as others without that provitamin activity, such as lycopene and lutein, and others less studied in relation to human health such as phytoene or phytofluene [1–4].

In human beings, carotenoids can serve several important biological activities. The most widely studied and well-understood nutritional role for carotenoids is their provitamin activity. Deficiency of vitamin A is a major cause of premature death in developing nations, particularly among children. Vitamin A, which has many vital systemic functions in humans, can be produced within the body from certain carotenoids, notably \( \beta \)-carotene [5].
Carotenoids also potentially play an important role in human health by acting as biological antioxidants, protecting cells and tissues from the damaging effects of free radicals and singlet oxygen. Lycopene, the hydrocarbon carotenoid that gives tomatoes their red colour, is particularly effective at quenching the destructive potential of singlet oxygen [6]. Lutein and zeaxanthin and xanthophylls found in corn and in leafy greens such as kale and spinach, are believed to function as protective antioxidants in the macular region of the human retina, protection against cataract formation, coronary heart diseases and stroke [7–9]. Astaxanthin, a xanthophyll found in salmon, shrimp and other seafoods, is another naturally occurring xanthophyll with potent antioxidant properties [10]. Other health benefits of carotenoids that may be related to their antioxidative potential, include enhancement of immune system function [11], protection from sunburn [12] and inhibition of the development of certain types of cancers [13].

In this overview, food sources and intake, effects of food processing and bioavailability have been considered.

2 Food sources and intake

2.1 Carotenoid content of foods

In developed countries, 80–90% of the carotenoid intake comes from fruit and vegetable consumption. Of the more than 700 naturally occurring carotenoids identified thus far, as many as 50 are present in the human diet and can be absorbed and metabolized by the human body [14]; however only six (β-carotene, β-cryptoxanthin, α-carotene, lycopene, lutein and zeaxanthin), representing more than 95% of total blood carotenoids, are present in the blood of people from different countries and have been studied and associated with some health benefits. The most studied carotenoids are the following six: β-carotene, β-cryptoxanthin, α-carotene, lycopene, lutein and zeaxanthin, which are all important in human nutrition due to their biological activities. ‘The Carotenoid Content of US Foods’ is a comprehensive database, representative of US food consumption and including raw, processed and cooked forms, as described by Holden et al. in 1999 [15]. Similarly, O’Neill et al. [3] reported a European database covering the most commonly consumed carotenoid-rich foods in five European countries: UK, Ireland, Spain, France and The Netherlands. This database is a compilation of investigations from the 1990s. In 1995, Hart and Scott [16] investigated the carotenoid content of vegetables and fruits commonly consumed in the UK. Leth et al. [17] presented the carotenoid contents of Danish food, and Mrukovic et al. [18] presented an Austrian Carotenoid Database comprising raw vegetables grown in Austria.

In this paper, only data from recent studies on the above-mentioned six important carotenoids and their content in foods are reported, covering most of the period from about 2000 to March 2007. Foods included are vegetables, fruits and dairy products, representing the main part of carotenoid intake in Europe. Data about exotic fruits imported into Europe are also included. In Table 1, data on the content of carotenoids in raw and in a few processed foods are presented. Contents refer to the edible part of the food and are stated as μg per 100 g fresh weight (or volume). In some papers, contents were related to dry weight and those values were converted to fresh weight and included in Table 1 only when the moisture content of the food was documented. Furthermore, zeaxanthin was sometimes included in the reported lutein content, as the two carotenoids are not separated by all employed analytical methods. The analytical methods are continuously being improved, leading to more specific data on carotenoids. This also results in data on contents of other carotenoids, e.g. phytoene and phytofluene, present in tomatoes and tomato products, and violaxanthin present in other vegetables and fruits, e.g. melons. Data for these carotenoids are not included in Table 1.

Several factors affect the composition and content of carotenoids in foods, e.g. variety, genotype, season, geographic location/climate, stage of maturity and growing conditions.

2.1.1 Genotype effects

The genotype affects the composition and content of carotenoids in different varieties and cultivars of fruit and vegetables. Lenucci et al. [40] showed that the content of lycopene and β-carotene varied significantly among 14 cultivars of cherry tomatoes. Likewise, the total carotenoid content ranged from 3700 to 12 200 μg/100 g among 50 cultivars of red-fleshed watermelons from US [45]. Wall [24] studied composition of different cultivars of banana and papaya. The major carotenoids found in bananas were lutein, α-carotene and β-carotene, and the average content of these carotenoids differed up to two-fold among the two cultivars investigated. Among papaya cultivars, lycopene was found in the red-fleshed samples but not in the yellow-fleshed ones, while β-carotene, β-cryptoxanthin and lutein were present in all samples. In conclusion, there is a high variability in the content of carotenoids in foods reported by different authors.

2.1.2 Seasonal, geographical and cultivation variation

The effects of season, geographic location and cultivation practise on carotenoid composition have been investigated in tomato cultivars. Raffo et al. [41] harvested greenhouse cherry tomatoes at full ripeness at six different times of the year. No definite seasonal trend nor correlation with solar radiation or temperature was found for total carotenoids (sum of eight carotenoids), nevertheless tomatoes harvested in mid-summer (July) had the lowest average level of lycopene (7061 μg/100 g), whereas tomatoes from March contained 11 969 μg/100 g. Toor et al. [46] also studied sea-
Table 1. Data for the content of major carotenoids in selected foods (µg/100 g or 100 mL fresh weight/volume)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foods</th>
<th>Lutein</th>
<th>Zeaxanthin</th>
<th>β-Cryptoxanthin</th>
<th>α-Carotene</th>
<th>β-Carotene</th>
<th>Lycopene</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plant origin</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[19–21]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avocado</td>
<td>123–188</td>
<td>n.d.–39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>86–192</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[22]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basil</td>
<td>7050</td>
<td>il^1</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bean, green</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[25]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>707–3300</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[17, 25]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage, white</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot</td>
<td>254–510</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[17, 26]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chili, red</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[27]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cress</td>
<td>5610–7540</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[26, 28]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>459–840</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[17, 18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dill</td>
<td>13 820</td>
<td>il</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg plant</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endive</td>
<td>2060–6150</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[26, 29]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[30]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit, red</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guava</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>19–118</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[23]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale</td>
<td>4800–11 470</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[31]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[32]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leek</td>
<td>3680</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>1000–7480</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[25, 26, 28, 29]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin juice</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>[33]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nectarine, peel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.–31</td>
<td>5–307</td>
<td></td>
<td>[34]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nectarine, flesh</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.–21</td>
<td>2–131</td>
<td></td>
<td>[34]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange juice</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>16–151</td>
<td>n.d.–31</td>
<td>n.d.–98</td>
<td></td>
<td>[33]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsley</td>
<td>6400–10 650</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>4440–4680</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>[17, 18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pea</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>520</td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.–36</td>
<td>11–379</td>
<td>[20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach, peel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.–16</td>
<td>4–168</td>
<td>[34]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper, orange</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>[35]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>70–124</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>139–347</td>
<td>265–605</td>
<td>[23]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pistachio</td>
<td>770–4900</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.–510</td>
<td></td>
<td>[36, 37]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum, peel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3–39</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>217–410</td>
<td></td>
<td>[34]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum, flesh</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3–13</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>40–188</td>
<td></td>
<td>[34]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato, sweet</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7830</td>
<td></td>
<td>[27]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumpkin</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>[3, 20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhubarb</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>[20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sage</td>
<td>6350</td>
<td>il</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>2780</td>
<td></td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>5930–7900</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>3100–4810</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>[18, 38]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td>46–213</td>
<td>il</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>320–1500</td>
<td>850–12 700</td>
<td>[17, 20, 26, 32, 39]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato, cherry</td>
<td>n.d.–25</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>300–1100</td>
<td>800–12 000</td>
<td>[32, 40, 41]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato, concentrate</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49 300–94 000</td>
<td></td>
<td>[20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato juice</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>369</td>
<td>1024–11 000</td>
<td>[20, 42]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato ketchup</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>135–500</td>
<td>4710–23 400</td>
<td>[17, 20, 32, 43]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato sauce, instant</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5600–39 400</td>
<td>[20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato soup, instant</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>–</td>
<td>12 400–19 900</td>
<td>[20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelon, red</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>314–777</td>
<td>4770–13 523</td>
<td>[20, 23]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effects of nitrogen rate and form on the accumulation of carotenoid pigments in the leaf tissue of greenhouse-grown kale were investigated by Kopsell et al. [31]. Treatment with different amounts of nitrogen at a constant 1:3 ratio of NH$_4$–N and NO$_3$–N showed that concentrations of β-carotene and lutein were not affected by nitrogen rate on a fresh weight basis, however on a dry weight basis the carotenoids increased linearly to increasing nitrogen rate. Increasing NO$_3$–N from 0 to 100%, at a constant nitrogen rate, resulted in increases in both lutein and β-carotene. 

Commercially available Spanish orange juices, including one mandarin juice, were investigated by Melendez-Martinez et al. [33]. Hulshof et al. [44] found an effect of season on the content of β-carotene in milk samples from the Netherlands. β-Carotene was the predominant carotenoid in all the analysed dairy products even if carotenoid levels in dairy products are extremely low and of very little significance to overall intakes. Milk sampled from January to April contained approximately 20% less β-carotene than milk sampled from July to October, probably due to seasonal differences in animal feeding practices. However, no regional differences as a consequence of homogeneous climate were found.

### 2.1.3 Stage of maturity and storage

de Azvedo-Meleiro and Rodriguez-Amaya [29] found large differences in the carotenoid contents between young and mature leaves from the same head of endive, lettuce and New Zealand spinach. In endive and lettuce, the carotenoid concentration of the mature leaves were about two to four times those of the young leaves. In contrast, the mature leaves of New Zealand spinach only contained about 75% that of the young leaves, and the principal carotenoids were β-carotene, lutein, violaxanthin, neoxanthin and luteoxanthin. The coloured compounds in pistachio nuts from different geographical regions (Greece, Iran, Italy, Turkey), each presenting specific varieties, were studied by Bellomo.
and Fallico [37]. The level of the main carotenoid, lutein, depended on type of cultivar, cultivation practise and ripeness as well as origin of the nuts, the lutein content diminishing with ripening. Among ripe nuts the Italian samples had the highest lutein content.

When storing greenhouse tomatoes at different temperatures for 10 days, Toor and Savage [39], like in earlier observations, found about two-fold more lycopene in tomatoes stored at 15°C and 25°C than in refrigerated tomatoes at 7°C (7.5 and 3.2 mg/100 g, respectively).

2.1.4 Potential rich sources
In many developing countries, vitamin A deficiency is widespread, leading to a general need to increase the vitamin A intake of the population, even if the major food source of dietary vitamin A in these areas are provitamin A carotenoids. This enhancement of carotenoids might be achieved, e.g. by cultivating crops containing higher amounts of provitamin A carotenoids, traditional plant breeding or by genetic engineering [48–50]. Likewise, Western countries focus on fruit and vegetable consumption and the associated health benefits. Carotenoids are among the active components of fruits and vegetables with potential health effects, and enhancement of carotenoid levels might thus be desirable. Examples of investigations into richer sources of carotenoids are outlined below.

Kidmose et al. [51] studied carotenoids in different genotypes of spinach. The total carotenoid content varied from 17.76 mg/100 g (in the lightest green genotype) to 22.63 mg/100 g (in the darkest one) with highest β-carotene, lutein and neoxanthin levels. Xu et al. [52] analysed the carotenoid composition of peel and juice of ordinary and lycopene-accumulating mutants of orange, pummelo, and grapefruit. Carotenoid profiles of 36 major carotenoids varied with tissue types, citrus species, and mutations. Profiles of peel and juice differed, and content of total carotenoids was much higher in peels.

We summarized the most relevant investigations about the principal food sources of carotenoids. New Zealand spinach are rich in carotenoids, and are one of the most popular leafy vegetables in Brazil and de Azevedo-Meleiro and Rodriguez-Amaya [29] reported levels of about 3800 μg β-carotene, 4800 μg lutein, 2200 μg violaxanthin and 1500 μg neoxanthin per 100 g mature leaves. Likewise, Rajyalakshmi et al. [53] studied contents of total carotenoid and β-carotene in South Indian forest green leafy vegetables, and found high contents in some varieties. Furtado et al. [54] analysed carotenoid content in common Costa Rican vegetables and fruits, and pointed out rich sources. Content of carotenoids in commonly consumed Asian vegetables was studied by Kidmose et al. [27]. Many varieties had high contents of β-carotene, lutein and other xanthophylls, e.g. drumstick leaves and edible rape turnip leaves. Lako et al. [55] reported carotenoid profiles of a wide selection of Fijian fruit and vegetables, and found many rich sources among green leafy vegetables, e.g. drumstick leaves as above.

It is also worth noting that the ongoing trend towards globalization is modulating both the availability of foods (i.e. exotic fruits, carotenoid-fortified foods), and the social habits in relation to food consumption in some European countries.

2.2 Sampling of foods for carotenoid analysis
In the field of nutrition, sampling is generally aimed at taking samples representative of the eating habits of certain consumers, e.g. of the population of a nation. Proper sampling is of utmost importance to avoid unintended variability. When designing the sampling plan for a study of carotenoids in vegetables and fruits, it is important to consider many aspects. Thus a sample plan should include conditions that might influence carotenoid composition and content, i.e. cultivation conditions like: choice of variety and cultivar, geographical location, season and year, agricultural practices – like nutrients and fertilizers at disposal, and cultivation in open field or in greenhouse – and stage of maturity. Furthermore, harvesting and postharvest handling, storing, possible processing or cooking, should also be taken into account for a sufficient sample description.

2.3 Analytical methods
Like the above-mentioned agricultural and sampling aspects, the analytical methods by which the carotenoids are determined influence the levels of the different carotenoids.

The general steps in the analyses of carotenoids include: sample preparation, extraction and saponification, separation, detection and quantification. Errors can be introduced in each of these steps.

Several considerations must be taken into account throughout the analysis to get reliable results, as carotenoids are highly susceptible to isomerization or degradation from light, heat, oxygen, acids, prooxidant metals and active surfaces [56–58]. Otherwise, the carotenoids might to some extent undergo isomerization or degradation.

2.3.1 Sample preparation
Before homogenization, an appropriate portion of the food, e.g. vegetables should be trimmed and cleaned and only those parts that are normally eaten should be included in the analyses [18]. The foods might be lyophilized or frozen to avoid changes in the carotenoid concentrations before preparation. These procedures should ensure that representative samples are ready for extraction.

2.3.2 Extraction and saponification
In food analyses, the procedure normally includes extraction of the carotenoids followed by alkaline saponification
of the ester forms present in certain foods. In addition, the saponification step removes interfering substances like chlorophylls and unwanted lipids before the final extraction of the carotenoids. Saponification is not necessary for samples without these compounds.

Several extraction procedures have been applied, and have been described in other reviews [57–60]. Numerous organic solvents have been used either alone or in mixtures for liquid-liquid extraction, which is the general procedure. As an alternative to the traditional method, supercritical fluid extraction (SFE) has been applied in some recent investigations [61]. To prevent carotenoid losses during extraction, antioxidants such as butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) are usually added to the extraction solvent. Moreover, internal standards might be used to assess losses during the extraction [15, 62]. In some studies, an SPE is added as a further purification of carotenoids prior to the determination [17].

2.3.3 Separation, detection and quantification
Traditionally, determination of carotenoids in foods was performed by measuring the total absorption of the extract at a specific wavelength and calculating the amount using β-carotene as a standard. This was later improved by separation of carotenes and xanthophylls by open-column chromatography (OCC). The introduction of HPLC equipped with UV and/or PDA detectors made the isolation, detection and quantification of the individual carotenoids possible, thus greatly enhancing the quality of the analytical results. More recently, the application of HPLC coupled with MS (LC-MS) has proven a powerful tool for identification of carotenoids. This technique is very sensitive and might also provide information about structure. By coupling HPLC with NMR the structure of the carotenoids might be completely elucidated.

There are no general HPLC conditions of choice neither for mobile phase nor column [30, 57, 60]. Both normal-phase and RP HPLC can be applied to separate the carotenoids [19, 63, 64]. However, the most frequently used systems are RP [59]. Many different solvents have been applied as gradient or isocratic mobile phases. To prevent oxidation of carotenoids, an antioxidant is often added to the mobile phase. The column selection depends on the requirements for the separation of the individual carotenoids and their isomers. Monomeric C18 columns separate most of the xanthophylls, but not lutein and zeaxanthin, whereas these components can be resolved with polymeric C18 columns [65]. Similarly, the nonpolar carotenoids, e.g. α- and β-carotene, are poorly resolved with the monomeric C18 columns and partly separated with the polymeric C18 columns. Since Sander and Wise [65] showed an improved separation of both polar and nonpolar carotenoids including geometric isomers with a polymeric C30 column, this type of column has been used for a variety of food analyses [19, 66, 67].

2.3.4 Quality assurance and standard methods
To get reliable results in analysis of carotenoids it is always advisable to include measures of quality assurance. Preferably, the method should be validated and, e.g. sensitivity, selectivity, recovery, repeatability and reproducibility estimated. Scott et al. [56] developed a vegetable mix reference material (RM), and the use of standard or in-house RMs is highly recommendable [18] for assuring the analytical quality. Furthermore, purity of the carotenoids should be considered and care taken in the standardization of carotenoid solutions [16].

As reported above, no generally applicable standard method for determination of individual carotenoids in food has been introduced. However, standard methods are available from the Association of Analytical Communities (AOAC) [68] using OCC with spectrophotometric determination of carotenes and xanthophylls, respectively and European Committee for Standardization (CEN) [69] has published a standard method for determination of total β-carotene by HPLC with UV–Vis detection.

2.4 Carotenoid intake
It is widely assumed that serum concentrations of carotenoids reflect, at least to some extent, the consumption of carotenoid-containing foods [70]. The influence of diet as a factor of serum carotenoid concentrations has long been known, although both dietary intake and serum concentrations of carotenoids have shown a high variability both within and between subjects in different populations [71–75]. Seasonal variations in individual carotenoid intake, and serum concentrations, have been reported in some European countries (i.e. Spain) while not in others (i.e. UK, Republic of Ireland, Finland) [3, 73, 74, 76], even when total carotenoid intake may not vary significantly (i.e. Spain) [3]. Although fluctuations between seasons may be observed for several carotenoids both in the diet and serum levels [74–77], in Spanish diet, these reach statistical significance only for β-cryptoxanthin (higher in winter) and lycopene (higher in summer); these changes are found to be in accordance with the availability and consumption of the major dietary contributors (i.e. citrus fruits and tomato and watermelon, respectively) [76, 77].

A European north–south gradient for the intake of some carotenoids and serum concentrations, both within and between European countries, have been reported [3, 75, 78, 79]. This pattern is consistent with food availability data (i.e. fruits and vegetables) among European countries since southern (Mediterranean) countries (i.e. Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain) consume greater amounts of fruits and vegetables than northern countries (i.e. UK, Ireland, Scandinavian countries) [80, 81]. In some countries, this geographical trend has been reported for both total and individual carotenoid intake and, overall, it is associated with variations in fruit and vegetables consumption (i.e. in UK, low in the
North) and with socioeconomic status and cultural factors. In fact, the specific traditional and cultural factors between the two groups of populations, and in addition the changes in marketing could contribute to the change of life style [78]. Consistently, serum levels also show this distribution trend across north–south axis.

Time trends in carotenoid intake have been scarcely assessed in European countries. Nonetheless, changes in major dietary sources of carotenoids (fruits, vegetables, cereals and recently fortified foods) is known to have occurred in European countries during the last decades [81–83] which is partly explained by changes in socio-economical, demographic and cultural factors. Time variation, on a short-term basis, in carotenoid intake has been assessed in Denmark, where, apparently, intake pattern of carotenoids has not changed from 1995 to 1997 [17]. Similarly, in Spain, using almost the same methodology, a fairly consistent qualitative and quantitative pattern of carotenoid intake from fresh fruits and vegetables was observed on a short-term basis, i.e. between 1996 and 2004, although this pattern was different when data were calculated on a longer time scale, i.e. 1960–1980 (it could be due to changes in fruit and vegetables consumption of populations) [77].

### 2.5 Methodology

Estimated intakes of carotenoids vary widely both on an individual, regional and national level, and significant seasonal variations in intake of individual carotenoids have been also reported in some countries (i.e Spain) [76, 77]. Carotenoid intake assessment, at both the individual and group level, has been shown to be complicated mainly for the high variability within-subject and between-subject intake, inaccuracies associated with methods of dietary assessment, and inconsistencies in food composition tables (FCTs) and databases [84–86].

The food balance sheets (FBS) [83] present a comprehensive picture of the pattern of a country’s food supply during a specified reference period. The FBS shows for each food item – i.e. each primary commodity and a number of processed commodities potentially available for human consumption – the sources of supply and its utilization. The total quantity of foodstuffs produced in a country added to the total quantity imported and adjusted to any change in stocks that may have occurred since the beginning of the reference period gives the supply available during that period. On the utilization side a distinction is made between the quantities exported, fed to livestock, used for seed, put to manufacture for food use and nonfood uses, losses during storage and transportation, and food supplies available for human consumption. The per capita supply of each such food item available for human consumption is then obtained dividing the respective quantity by the related data on the population actually partaking of it. Data on per capita food supplies are expressed in terms of quantity and – by applying appropriate food composition factors for all primary and processed products – also in terms of caloric value and protein and fat content.

Carotenoids content has been calculated applying USDA FCTs.

Sources of nutritional data have been classified at different levels and data obtained are of different type (Table 2) [87].

Regardless of the confidence in the method used for dietary assessment, evaluation of nutrient exposure by dietary means is based on the availability of reliable food composition data. Since the nutritional interest in carotenoids was largely due to their provitamin A activity, traditionally, FCTs and databases have, traditionally, not included values for individual carotenoids in foods, although they have considered vitamin A (retinol equivalents) content. However, the increasing evidence of the potential role of several constituents present in fruits and vegetables (carotenoids) in human health led to a revision of former data and the inclusion of nonprovitamin A carotenoids (i.e. lutein) in the new FCTs and databases during the 1990s (Table 3) [88].

### 2.6 Available data of dietary intake

Few studies have been carried out to ascertain the total intakes of carotenoids in the European diet. A European...
carotenoid food database was published along with the assessment, by a Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ) at individual level, of the carotenoid intakes of people groups in a five-country comparative study [3]. Main results are presented in Table 4. However, it should be noticed that the population used in this study was a group in a determined area of each of the five participant countries (ca. 80 subjects per country). When interpreting the data provided by that study, it should be considered that the levels of intake reported in this study are somewhat consistent with the findings in serum of the same individuals. That is, the relative crude intake and the relative contribution of xanthophylls and carotenoids indicate ‘true’ differences in carotenoid intake (and food sources) among European countries. Participants may not necessarily be representative of the overall population although it was assumed that they followed a typical food intake pattern characteristic of their country. In addition, all subjects filled out a common FFQ.

Table 5 summarizes carotenoids intake in some European countries (UK, Finland, The Netherlands, Spain and Italy) from representative literature. To have an overall view of other countries, we have to take into account the analysis of FBSs. However, both crude data and comparisons should be considered with caution since, as shown, sample size and methodology differ between studies.

Table 6 shows the percentage contribution of individual food items evaluated by FFQ to the total intake of each of the five carotenoids in parentheses.

**Table 4. Comparison of carotenoid intake (mg/day) in adults in five European countries (data are medians and interquartile ranges)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>β-Carotene</th>
<th>Lutein (+ Zeaxanthin)</th>
<th>Lycopene</th>
<th>α-Carotene</th>
<th>β-Cryptoxanthin</th>
<th>Total carotenoids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain (n70)</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>1.58 – 4.41</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.75 – 4.34</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>0.50 – 2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France (n76)</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>3.83 – 8.00</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.71 – 3.91</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>2.14 – 8.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (n71)</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>3.66 – 6.56</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.19 – 2.37</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>3.2 – 7.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep of Ireland (n76)</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>3.47 – 7.42</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.14 – 2.1</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>2.73 – 7.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands (n75)</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>2.93 – 5.7</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.42 – 3.04</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>2.79 – 7.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Table 5. Intake (mg/person/day) reported in several European countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Lutein (+ zeaxanthin)</th>
<th>β-Cryptoxanthin</th>
<th>Lycopene</th>
<th>α-Carotenoid</th>
<th>β-Carotenoid</th>
<th>Dietary method/database</th>
<th>Foods/population assessed (subjects)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[73]</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>4 days collection HPLC data</td>
<td>Vegetables UK; N = 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[95]</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>7 days diary carotenoid database</td>
<td>Total diet UK (EPIC Norfolk cohort) N = 176 controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[78]</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.022 – 0.033</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.31 – 0.34</td>
<td>1.47 – 1.70</td>
<td>4 days weighed records (+ eating out)</td>
<td>Total diet UK (National Diet and Nutrition Survey, N = 1.478 (&lt;65 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[96]</td>
<td>2.45/2.55 (w/m)</td>
<td>0.21/0.16 (w/m)</td>
<td>1.30/1.05 (w/m)</td>
<td>0.69/0.69 (w/m)</td>
<td>2.90/2.96 (w/m)</td>
<td>Dietary questionnaire; energy-adjusted intake Harvard School of Public Health database</td>
<td>Total diet The Netherlands N = 120.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[96]</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>Dietary questionnaire; energy-adjusted intake Harvard School of Public Health database</td>
<td>Total diet Finland (ATBC study, placebo branch); N = 6.771 men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[76]</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Family Budget Survey HPLC data</td>
<td>Fresh fruits and vegetables Spain; N = 72.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[97]</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3.1 – 5.0</td>
<td>Two 24 h recalls; CIQUAL database</td>
<td>Total diet Spain; N = 2.346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[98]</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>Dietary history questionnaire EPIC database (2nd Edn.)</td>
<td>Total diet Spain; N = 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[99]</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>Dietary history questionnaire EPIC database (2nd Edn.)</td>
<td>Total diet Spain (EPIC cohort); N = 41.446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[77]</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>Family Budget Survey HPLC data</td>
<td>Fresh fruits and vegetables Spain; N = 6.000 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[100]</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>7.38</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Seven-day dietary diary HPLC data</td>
<td>Total diet Italy (INN-CA Study); N = 1.968</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Netherlands Cohort study; 62.412 men, 58.279 women (assessed at baseline).
b) Subjects considered as controls were patients admitted to the hospitals with a variety of diagnosis unrelated to the principal study factors (gastric cancer).
Table 6. Major foods contributing to carotenoid intake in adults in five European countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France (Grenoble)</td>
<td>β-Carotene Carrots (38)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spinach (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lutein Spinach (31)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lettuce (8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eggs (8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mix vegetables</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tomatoes (25)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pizza (16)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>α-Carotene Carrots (82)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Oranges (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β-Cryptoxanthin Orange juice (50)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oranges (30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republic of Ireland</td>
<td>Carrots (60)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Cork)</td>
<td>Tomat. prod (13)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peas (19)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Broccoli (16)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Carrots (9)</td>
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<td>Tomato soup (17)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pizza (16)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Carrots (90)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coleslaw (5)</td>
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<td>Cucumber (8)</td>
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<td>Green beans (4)</td>
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<td>Peppers (6)</td>
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<td>Peas (3)</td>
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<td>Tomato (8)</td>
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<td>Sweetcorn (2)</td>
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<td>Total (%) 75</td>
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<td>Total (%) 85</td>
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<td>Total (%) 84</td>
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<td>Total (%) 81</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total (%) 97</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK (Coleraine)</td>
<td>Spinach (30)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peas (36)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Broccoli (8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eggs (8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sweetcorn (7)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tomatoes (21)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pizza (15)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrots (88)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Goose (8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coleslaw (6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tomato (4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Oranges (4)</td>
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<td>Potatoes (4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peas (4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tomatoes (16)</td>
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<td>Spinach (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sweetcorn (3)</td>
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<td>Lettuce (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cucumber (8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Green beans (4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peppers (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Netherlands (Zeist)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Broccoli (10)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sweetcorn (7)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chicory (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oranges (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain (Madrid)</td>
<td>Spinach (26)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peas (24)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lettuce (16)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tomatoes (55)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tomato puree (42)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrots (87)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Oranges (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tangerines (41)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oranges (38)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7. Ten top contributors (%) to lutein (+ zeaxanthin) intake in five European countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France (N = 76)</td>
<td>Spinach (31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Ireland (N = 76)</td>
<td>Peas (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (N = 71)</td>
<td>Peas (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands (N = 75)</td>
<td>Spinach (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain (N = 70)</td>
<td>Spinach (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lettuce (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broccoli (16)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eggs (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mix vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cucumber (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Green beans (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courgette (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peas (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tomato (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweetcorn (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (%) 75</td>
<td>Total (%) 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green veg. 56%</td>
<td>Green veg. 47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| England (N = 71) | Carrots (53)     |
|                  | Tomatoes (21)    |
|                  | Eggs (8)         |
|                  | Mix vegetables   |
|                  | Cucumber (8)     |
|                  | Courgette (4)    |
|                  | Peas (3)         |
|                  | Tomato (3)       |
|                  | Sweetcorn (2)    |
| Total (%) 75     | Total (%) 84     |
| Green veg. 57%   | Green veg. 57%   |

| Scotland (N = 75) | Spinach (42)     |
|                  | Peas (10)        |
|                  | Broccoli (10)    |
|                  | Sweetcorn (7)    |
|                  | Chicory (8)      |
|                  | Oranges (5)      |
|                  | Tangerines (41)  |
| Total (%) 75     | Total (%) 81     |
| Green veg. 65%   | Green veg. 65%   |

| Spain (N = 70)   | Spinach (26)     |
|                  | Peas (24)        |
|                  | Broccoli (34)    |
|                  | Lettuce (16)     |
|                  | Tomatoes (55)    |
|                  | Tomato puree (42)|
| Total (%) 75     | Total (%) 97     |
| Green veg. 57%   | Green veg. 57%   |

a) Assessed in winter.

Table 7 shows estimations using data obtained in a European multicentre study where dietary intake was estimated using a common FFQ and database of carotenoids in food [88].

As shown, although green vegetables are important contributors to lutein intake in five European groups, relative contribution differs substantially among them. It is also worth noting the relative contribution of nongreen vegetables and fruits and the fact that nongreen foods may account for almost half of the total lutein intake in some groups. More importantly, zeaxanthin, is mostly provided by nongreen vegetables and fruits [76, 88].

In Table 8, a comparison between countries on the relative contribution of each carotenoid to total carotenoids intake calculated from FBS is reported [4, 83].

While several methodological constraints (databases, groups assessed and method for dietary assessment) limit the comparability of crude intakes of carotenoids among groups, an alternative approach to compare groups/populations is to estimate the relative contribution of each carotenoid to the total intake. This approach does not overcome all the constraints regarding the reliability of the data used for comparison but may provide an interesting picture for comparative (ecological) purposes. This approach is based on several facts:

(i) The relative contribution of each carotenoid has some association with its crude intake (g/person/day), and therefore the intake of its major dietary sources, and provides information for each carotenoid (and food sources) within the context of the total diet. For example, intake of β-cryptoxanthin may be similar in two groups but the contribution to total carotenoid intake may be significantly different.

(ii) The above point relates to other nutritional and physiological facts. Carotenoids may interact with each other (synergistic and antagonistic) during absorption, transport, deposition and biological action. Thus, the relative amount of each class and type of carotenoid in the total diet become relevant [101].
(iii) Finally, because of each carotenoid may display different biological functions, actions and associations, relevant both at individual and population level, the relative occurrence of each carotenoid within the total diet may become important when comparing groups within an epidemiological context.

For example, as shown in Table 9 based on the data reported by O’Neill et al. [3], using the same dietary method and database, α-carotene and β-carotene show a consistent contribution in the European countries (3–9 and 31–39%, respectively), regardless of the dietary habits and geographical origin of the groups assessed. On the contrary, for lutein and lycopene, a different contribution pattern is observed between Spain (37 and 17%, respectively) and the rest of the European countries (11–16 and 30–35%, respectively). Regarding β-cryptoxanthin, a clearly distinct relevance is observed with Spain showing two- to three-fold more contribution than in others, especially north European countries.

Table 8. Relative contribution (%) of each carotenoid intake to total carotenoid intake according to FBSs data [83].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total intake μg/daya)</th>
<th>Lutein (+ zeaxanthin)</th>
<th>β-Cryptoxanthin</th>
<th>Lycopene</th>
<th>α-Carotene</th>
<th>β-Carotene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>9.368</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>10.092</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>15.753</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>7.521</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>8.654</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>20.968</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
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<td>France</td>
<td>13.984</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>12.789</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>11.786</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Sum of lutein (zeaxanthin), β-cryptoxanthin, lycopene, α-carotene and β-carotene. Based on data from USDA Food Composition Tables [4].

Table 9. Relative contribution (%) of each carotenoid intake to total carotenoid intakea)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country (ref.)</th>
<th>Carotenoid intake (mg/person/day)a)</th>
<th>Foods assessed</th>
<th>Lutein (+ zeaxanthin)</th>
<th>β-Cryptoxanthin</th>
<th>Lycopene</th>
<th>α-Carotene</th>
<th>β-Carotene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[76] 3.5</td>
<td>Fresh fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[3] 9.54</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[99] 5.88</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[102] 3.25</td>
<td>Fresh fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>[103] 6.1</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[3] 13.71</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[96] 7.55</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>32 (M)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[104] 7.41</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>34 (W)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[104] 4.0</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[96] 4.12</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[3] 16.06</td>
<td>Total diet</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Ireland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall range</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>11–37</td>
<td>0–14</td>
<td>14–36</td>
<td>3–13</td>
<td>21–50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Mean or median values; total carotenoid intake = sum of lutein, zeaxanthin, β-cryptoxanthin, α-carotene and β-carotene.
3 Effects of food processing on carotenoid stability and/on bioavailability

Carotenoid content and pattern of food material are modified during postharvest storage of plant materials, as well as during processing – at home or industry – and storage of food products. Particularly, thermal processing (i.e., blanching, pasteurization, cooking, canning, frying and drying) may decrease carotenoid contents, but at the same time may be beneficial through the disruption of food matrices (e.g., cell walls and membranes) and so facilitating the liberation (bound) and solubilization of carotenoids (free and ester forms) resulting in an increased carotenoid bioavailability. Processing operations that reduce the particle size of food material (e.g., chopping, grinding, milling or homogenization) or the incorporation of an oil-phase in food formulations (e.g., addition of oil to salads, emulsions), may also enhance carotenoid bioaccessibility [105–109]. Emerging technologies (e.g., high pressure-low temperature, pulse electric fields) and several new approaches in food packaging (e.g., modified atmospheres, addition of antioxidants and active packages) in addition may modify carotenoid contents of food [110, 111]. Therefore, food processing implies a relevant impact on the nutritional quality of food and the stability of micronutrients in foods during food supply. Thus, food processing has a relevant impact on the dietary patterns of the population.

3.1 Postharvest storage

Mayer-Miebach and Speit [112] reported that the total carotenoid content of Kintoki carrots was reduced by about 30% of the initial amount during 8 wks of storage at 1°C with 97% humidity. Lycopene content was reduced to about 60%, while only 20% of the β-carotene content was lost.

Kopas-Lane and Warthesen [113] found that the lutein content in spinach was nearly stable during storage at 4°C for 8 days in the dark, whereas up to 22% was lost when exposed to light.

3.2 Thermal processing

The scientific literature shows a wide variability of effects depending on the time/temperature conditions used (Table 10). The effects of important unit operations often used in industry are described below.

3.2.1 Kinetics of thermal degradation/isomerization

Studies towards the kinetics of thermal degradation and isomerization of carotenoids in food matrices are scarcely found in literature. Dewanto et al. [146] showed that the amount of all-trans-lycopene extracted from tomato homogenates, subjected to heat treatment at 88°C increased significantly 1.6-fold after 2 min and 2.7-fold after 15 or 30 min, as compared to non heated homogenates. The total (Z)-lycopene content increased by 6, 17 and 35% after 2, 15 and 30 min, respectively. After subjecting Nutri Red carrot purees with a 1% oil supplement to 2 h heat treatments at 100, 110, 120, 130 and 140°C, (all-E)-lycopene content decreased to 60, 63, 63, 38 and 25% of the initial value, respectively. Oil supplements had no effect on (all-E)-lycopene but slightly reduced isomerization. In samples without oil, (9Z)-lycopene increased by 10-, 30-, 41-, 43- and 38-fold at 110, 120, 130 and 140°C, respectively. Heat treatment at 70°C degraded only slight amounts of (all-E)-lycopene even after a 5 h heating time [121]. In homogenates of a zeaxanthin and lutein containing potato variety, the treatment temperature (25–150°C) had a much more marked effect on the carotenoid pattern than treatment time (0–5 h). The potato variety used for all experiments contained several carotenoids, mainly zeaxanthin (0.2–0.8 mg/100 g) and lutein (0.04–0.16 mg/100 g) [147]. At temperatures above 70°C lutein was totally degraded, while zeaxanthin was stable even for high-temperature and long-time treatments, regenerating 9-cis-zeaxanthin.

3.2.2 Blanching/pasteurization

Blanching (70–105°C) and pasteurization (60–85°C) are mild heat treatments for short time periods used to inactivate enzymes and vegetative microorganisms. Data obtained by Aman et al. [114], analysing spinach after steam-blanching for 2 min, have shown a decrease of total lutein (17%) and (9Z)-lutein contents (7%), while the (13Z)-isomer level was unaffected. According to Choe et al. [115], the lutein content of spinach was stable during blanching and steaming for 2 and 5 min, respectively. Control samples contained 30.99 mg lutein and 42.86 mg β-car-
otene per 100 g sample. In an orange–carrot juice mixture, no variations in lutein content were observed after pasteurizing at 98°C for 21 s, while about 45% more zeaxanthin was detected due to an enhanced extractability [118]. The same effect was shown after blanching of lycopene containing Kintoki carrots at 90°C for 15 min, which raised lycopene content for about 15% [107]. In tomato puree, lutein and zeaxanthin prevailed as individual stereoisomers [143]. So, from examples above mentioned, the different way of cooking could lead to a decreasing, an increasing or no variations in the content of single carotenoids; in addition, the way of cooking could modify the profile of carotenoid content in relationship with food matrix and stability of specific carotenoids in the foods.

### 3.2.3 Cooking/canning

A prolonged heating time of 2 h at 100°C caused a partial decrease (18%) of lycopene content in tomato pulp; (Z)-isomers were not detected [120]. The amount of lutein extracted from green peas increased by about 10–15% after boiling for 1 h [122]. In sweet corn, canning at 121°C in a rotary retort decreased total lutein and zeaxanthin content by 26 and 29%, respectively, while the amounts of (Z)-lutein and (Z)-zeaxanthin increased from 12 to 30% and from 7 to 25%, respectively, (13Z)-isomers of both lutein and zeaxanthin prevailed as individual stereoisomers [143].

### 3.2.4 Multistep heat treatment

After a commercial hot-break extraction of tomato paste at 90°C for 5–10 min followed by concentration under vacuum at 60–70°C and final sterilization at 121°C for...
30 min, the amount of (all-E)-lycopene extracted was enhanced about 1.4-fold, while the (Z)-lycopene and lutein contents remained unchanged [115]. Also, results obtained by Agarwal et al. [119] indicated the stability of (all-E)-lycopene under industrial processing conditions: raw tomatoes and various commercial tomato products, after a multi-step heat-treatment, were found to contain 5–10% (Z)- and 90–95% (all-E)-lycopene; no difference was observed.

### 3.2.5 Drying

For hot air drying, whole or chopped plant material is generally exposed to temperatures not exceeding 80°C. Therefore, no significant carotenoid losses or generation of (Z)-isomers are expected. However, oxidative losses may occur in some traditional slow drying methods that last over a period of few days. Much higher inlet temperatures are used for spray-drying, thus raising the probability of (Z)-isomer generation. Goula and Adamopoulos [131] observed oxidative lycopene losses (up to 32%) during spray-drying (air inlet temperature: 110–140°C) of tomato paste. On the other side, no significant carotenoid losses were observed in tomatoes dried at lower temperature (42°C) [130]. Enhanced carotenoid extractability after hot air drying has been reported by various authors: lycopene [121, 127, 128], lutein [132], zeaxanthin [133].

### 3.2.6 Frying

For frying, the material is cut, blanched, sometimes soaked in an antioxidant solution and, finally fried in fat or oil pre-heated to temperatures of 150–180°C. Food material is heated rapidly in the surface layers to the temperatures of the frying medium; however temperature does not exceed 100°C in inner layers. Lutein remained stable after frying of eight different potato varieties and a higher extractability of lutein was reported [138].

### 3.2.7 Microwave heating

The main industrial applications of microwave heating are tempering, baking and drying; other uses include blanching and cooking. In papaya, microwave blanching induced small losses of the total carotenoids [142]. Kchairik et al. [122] studied the effect of microwave cooking on lutein retention and its (Z)/(E) ratio for different vegetables. Under mild cooking conditions (750 W; spinach: 1.5 min; green beans: 4 min; broccoli: 5 min), the lutein levels and (Z)/(E) ratios remained unchanged. During microwave cooking (700 W) of sweet potato leaves, (all-E)-lycopene losses increased with increasing cooking times of up to 56% after 8 min; no (Z)-lyutein isomers were formed. The (9Z)-lyeptin, contained in the fresh leaves, was completely degraded, and two lutein dehydration products were identified [141]. After microwave vacuum drying with a microwave power program of 400 W continuously, (all-E)-lycopene content remained stable in Nutri Red carrot slices. However, significant losses of carotenoids were observed, when a combined microwave power programme (600/240 W), by which high temperatures were generated, was used. No (Z)/(E) isomerization took place [121].

### 3.3 Product storage

The effects of food storage are summarized in Table 11.

#### 3.3.1 Frozen storage

Long term frozen storage has been found to cause a reduction of the carotenoid content. For example, for watermelons, a decrease of up to 40% of the lycopene content was observed after 1-year storage at temperature ranges between −20 and −80°C [148]. However, lycopene was stable for three months in diced tomatoes stored at −20 and −30°C [149]. The exclusion of oxygen during frozen storage of tomato products reduces the rate of lycopene degradation [150, 151]. During frozen storage of pizza, the rate of degradation of the lycopene contained in the tomato ingredient is much faster than during frozen storage of the ingredient (tomato dices or purees) [150]. Depending on the packaging method (with/without oxygen exclusion; with/without paper box) up to 70% of lycopene may be destroyed.

#### 3.3.2 Cold storage

The cold storage of minimally processed (MP) plant material – generally freshly cut and washed – has been studied by several authors. de Azevedo-Meleiro and Rodriguez-Amaya [29] reported a 19% reduction of the lutein content of MP endive after 5 days storage at 7–9°C. The lycopene content of MP watermelon (75% of the total carotenoids) slightly decreased during storage at 9°C, however stored at 5°C under light the lycopene losses were lower [34].

#### 3.3.3 Storage at room temperature

During 1-year storage of commercially canned tomato juice no significant lycopene loss was observed at 25°C either at 37°C [119]. In commercially prepared tomato pulp, puree and paste lycopene remains stable even when stored under conditions of accelerated aging at 30, 40 and 50°C up to 90 days [154]. Light has an effect on the isomerization of lycopene in tomato juice: after 12 wks storage at 25°C in the dark the formation of (9Z)- and (13Z)-lycopene was favoured, while after the same time at the same temperature but using light storage (13Z) and (15Z) were the predominant lycopene isomers [159].

During storage of dried tomato products oxidation and isomerization are the main mechanisms of (all-E)-lycopene loss. In powders, with a great specific surface exposed to the storage conditions, an increased sensitivity for oxidative lycopene losses can be expected. Isomerization increases with increasing storage time and under illumination conditions; however oxidation increases mainly due to increased storage temperature. The residual moisture of the product
plays an important role in lycopene stability. Under inert atmosphere (nitrogen) storage, much greater lycopene losses were observed in foam-mat dried tomato powder with a moisture content <1% than in powders with ≈3% moisture content, confirming that the enhancement of oxidative reactions are associated with very low moisture materials [156]. However, in products with higher moisture contents (9–23%), an increase of moisture enhances the oxidative lycopene losses [157]. At very low moisture contents, lipid auto-oxidation is enhanced leading to important oxidative reactions [158] and (iv) its stability upon heating time and temperature, light as well as oxygen. Therefore, it is difficult to assess a general effect of food processing. In conclusion, the effects on carotenoids should focus on specific carotenoids in specific vegetables/fruits with the objective of optimizing industrial processes in order to improve the bioaccessibility and bioavailability of carotenoids (see Section 4).

### 3.4 Summary

It is evident that different processes have different effects on specific carotenoids probably due to: (i) the chemical/stereocchemical structure of the carotenoid (e.g. carotene, alcohol, epoxide, (Z)/(E)-isomer), (ii) its integration into a specific food matrices (e.g. free or esterified, as crystals or lipid droplets), (iii) the presence of pro-oxidants (Cu²⁺, Fe²⁺) and/or antioxidants (ascorbic acid, vitamin E) therein and (iv) its stability upon heating time and temperature, light as well as oxygen. Therefore, it is difficult to assess a general effect of food processing. In conclusion, the effects of thermal processing and storage on stability and bioavailability of carotenoids depend mainly on the severity of the thermal treatments applied. At lower temperatures (60–100°C), most carotenoids are stable and isomerization is negligible during blanching, pasteurization, cooking, low temperature drying and drying. Due to the disruption of the matrix of plant tissues and the destruction of the integrity of cell walls and membranes, carotenoid extractability is often increased. At temperatures above 100°C, practised for canning and sterilization, total carotenoid contents are decreased, major (Z)-isomerization occurs and bioavailability is improved due to enhanced matrix disruption and oil supplements. The fairly high bioavailability rise at processing temperatures above 100°C may be also due to isomerization rather than matrix disruption alone. In contrast, as an effect of oxygen, carotenoids are instable during drying processes as well as during storage of fresh, dry or frozen products. Further studies about processing and storage effects on carotenoids should focus on specific carotenoids in specific vegetables/fruits with the objective of optimizing industrial processes in order to improve the bioaccessibility and bioavailability of carotenoids (see Section 4).

### 4 Bioavailability

Bioavailability is defined as the fraction of a dietary component capable of being absorbed and available for use or storage. This is a crucial point in the assessment of the role of provitamins in human health, both to overcome deficiency and to potentially decrease the risk for several chronic diseases.

#### 4.1 Preabsorptive processes and absorption

Studies on absorption of carotenoids started in the early 1960s [161], however the molecular mechanisms involved in their passage through the enterocytes still remain a mat-
ter of debate [162]. Bioaccessibility of carotenoids in vegetables is remarkably low and these compounds are characterized by a slow rate of absorption both in animals and humans because their chemical structure deeply interacts with macromolecules within the plant food matrix [162]. As an example, an in vitro digestion model system reported that only 1–3% of the β-carotene in raw carrots is accessible for absorption; and the accessibility of lycopene in canned and fresh tomatoes was <1% [163, 164]. Further studies indicated that more than 70% of the carotenoids remained in the final digesta [165].

4.1.1 Storage factor influencing the release of carotenoids from food matrix

A lot of factors can influence the initial release of carotenoids from the food matrix and their subsequent dissolution in lipidic drop in the stomach and duodenum [166]. Release from the food matrix is the initial and important step in the absorption process of carotenoids. Generally they are present in complexes with proteins as in green leaf vegetables or in semicrystalline structure as in carrots and tomatoes. Then they have to be transferred or dissolved in the lipid phase before they are absorbed. Physically altering food by cooking, blending or finely chopping improves release from the food matrix [132, 164]. Furthermore, the gastric hydrolysis of dietary lipids and proteins increases the release of carotenoids from the food matrix, and begins the process of solubilization of carotenoids into mixed lipid micelles in the gut lumen. The transfer of carotenoids from the predominantly aqueous environment to bulk lipid or micelles requires very close proximity of carotenoids to lipid micelles that starts to happen during the gastric digestion [167]. In this phase, the roles of bile salts and pancreatic secretion are critical for the emulsification, and during solubilization of carotenoids in the mixed micelles. Furthermore, Serrano et al. [168], showed a significant inverse correlation between small intestine availability of carotenoids (lutein + β-carotene) and content of kland lignin, nonstarch polysaccharides and resistant protein in green leafy vegetables that should directly affect the intestinal availability of carotenoids acting as a barrier to the action of digestive enzymes and to the release of carotenoids from the food matrix.

Xanthophylls present in fruits, however, seem to be more efficiently released than β-carotene. In vitro studies indicated that, in green vegetables, epoxy-xanthophylls and their ester derivatives present in fruits are transferred more easily into the micellar phase [165, 169]. Furthermore, in the case of dietary ester of zeaxanthin, the partial hydrolysis promoted by carboxyl ester lipase during the small intestinal phase of digestion enhances the bioavailability of this carotenoid [170].

4.1.2 Postharvest factors influencing the carotenoid bioavailability

The effect of food processing on carotenoids bioavailability can be illustrated by comparing the blood response after eating a raw food compared with food that has been heat-treated and/or mechanically homogenized to disrupt the food matrix. Stahl and Sies [171] found that boiling tomato juice with 1% corn oil for 1 h before consumption led to a two-fold increase in lycopene plasma concentrations compared to the consumption of tomato juice not further heated. Porrini et al. [172] demonstrated that plasma total lycopene levels were higher after the intake of a commercial tomato puree that had undergone a process of heating and homogenization than after raw tomato consumption, thus demonstrating a significant effect of thermal treatment on food matrix and on absorption. On the same way, van het Hof et al. [173] observed that both, heating tomato for 1 h at 100°C and homogenization under high pressure, enhanced the lycopene response in both, trilglyceride-rich lipoproteins and plasma, significantly. During sterilization of a Nutri Red carrot homogenate with a 1% oil supplement at 130°C for 30 min, the isomeric ratio of (all-Z)- to total (Z)-isomers changed from 90:10 to 50:50. Isomeric ratio of the same homogenate, cooked at 100°C for 30 min without oil supplementation, was not altered. For consumption, oil content of all samples was 1%. Compared to the ingestion of an untreated control (blanched and stored at –50°C), a nine-fold increase with the lycopene content of the chylomicron fraction was found in the sterilized sample; bioavailability of the cooked samples increased by only 2.5-fold. Although no (5Z)-lycopene was generated in the homogenates during any of both thermal treatments, this isomer accounted for about 20% of the total lycopene in chylomicrons [174]. A remarkable enrichment of the relative contents of (5Z)-lycopene was also observed after ingestion of tomatoes, tomato juice and purée, respectively [175]. In contrast, lycopene uptake from whole cherry tomatoes, ingested either fresh or cooked at 100°C for 15 min without previous mechanical disruption, was not altered [176].

4.1.3 The composition of the meal on bioavailability

Experimental evidence has been accumulated on the role of dietary fat in the absorption and bioconversion of provitamin A carotenoids to vitamin A [14, 177]. The dietary fat intake plays an important role in the plasma responses to β-carotene supplements [178]. Recently, Brown et al. [179] showed that use of fat-free or reduced-fat salad dressings limited the absorption of carotenoids, which are abundant in fresh vegetable salads. In a view of these results, the authors suggested the threshold of 3–5 g fat per meal reported by Roodenburg et al. [180] and adopted as a guide-
line to promote optimal absorption of β-carotene [181]. In the study by Roodenburg et al., α-carotene and β-carotene were provided in the form of pure supplements dissolved in fat, and not from plant foods. Other investigators used plant sources and found that minimal dietary fat (2.4 g/meal) is sufficient for optimal absorption of provitamin A carotenoids and their bioconversion into vitamin A [9]. The effects of lipid intake on the absorption of carotenoids was confirmed by the observation that the addition of avocado fruit or avocado oil as a lipid source enhances absorption of lycopene and β-carotene and α-carotene, β-carotene and lutein, respectively in humans [182]. Dietary fibre intake is another factor that could regulate carotenoid bioavailability. It is a known fact that fibre decreases the absorption of carotenoids by entrapping them and interacting with bile acids; this leads to an increase of faecal excretion of fats and fat-soluble substances such as carotenoids [183, 184].

The inter-relationship of the different carotenoids present in the food matrix also affects carotenoid absorption. A competitive inhibition, towards the absorption mechanism of a single carotenoid derivative, in fact, may occur at the level of micellar incorporation, intestinal uptake, or lymphatic transport or at one or more of the later steps. It has been proposed that a high-dose intake of carotenoids may antagonize the bioavailability and absorption of other carotenoids. For example, studies on simultaneous ingestion of carotenoids indicate that β-carotene may interfere with absorption of lutein and canthaxanthin, while high doses of simultaneous combination between lycopene and β-carotene decrease bioavailability of both [185, 186]. In contrast, Hoppe et al. [187], showed no interaction towards lycopene absorption by β-carotene, β-cryptoxanthin, α-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin.

4.1.4 Physiological state of the consumer

Parasitism and disease resulting in intestinal dysfunction may have profound effects on carotenoid uptake and bioconversion, but these pathological states have not yet been adequately quantified. For example, in some studies, the lack of observed improvement in vitamin A status in individuals consuming dark green, leafy vegetables may be attributable, at least in part, to concomitant infection with intestinal helminths, Helicobacter pylori, or other organisms [188]. Persistent diarrhoea, lipid malabsorption, and deficiencies of vitamin A, protein and zinc also appear to be important factors that impair provitamin A-carotenoid utilization, in addition to their effects on vitamin A metabolism and turnover [166]. Carotenoid-rich fruits and vegetables may indeed provide sufficient vitamin A to meet physiological requirements and even replete body stores under conditions of relatively good health and hygiene. However, debilitating infections and parasitic infestations which are endemic in the tropics and subtropics both compromise carotenoid utilization and increase the individual's requirement for vitamin A. Thus, programs which seek to improve community vitamin A status through food-based interventions will be complemented and strengthened by public health measures which decrease the burden of infection and illness.

Also, age is another factor that contributes to carotenoid bioavailability [189]. Carroll et al. [190] estimated from the analysis FFQ that β-carotene and lycopene are the major dietary carotenoids obtained from a younger and older Irish population. The profile of plasma carotenoid concentrations showed that β-carotene is the major carotenoid in both age groups. Younger groups have higher plasma concentrations of lycopene, β-cryptoxanthin, lutein + zeaxanthin. As described in other European populations these moderate positive associations exist between several plasma carotenoid concentrations and estimated record dietary carotenoids in younger but not in older groups [191].

4.2 Methodology to assess bioavailability

Several confounding factors are present in the literature regarding the assessment of carotenoid bioavailability in humans. Generally the pharmacokinetic studies only provided information on relative bioavailability (relative to reference dose or control) and not on the absolute bioavailability of the carotenoids. Moreover, acute studies need to use large doses of carotenoids to elicit a quantifiable change in blood or urine excretion.

Frequently the approaches used in human studies are short-term, single-dose, pharmacokinetic studies or long-term, multiple-dose supplementation assays. In the latter, the information obtained, relative to nutritional status, depletion and/or saturation processes, could be affected by the typology of the protocol used (i.e. on samples collections, ‘acute’, postprandial metabolism or ‘chronic’) [192]. Furthermore, these studies could be broadly divided into those using large pharmacological doses, which are only partly available due to limitations in the absorption process, and those using more physiological carotenoid doses, either using pure substances, and different matrices, including foods.

Another critical point is the individual response. Based mostly on plasma concentrations observed after carotenoid administration, there is evidence to suggest that there are ‘poor’ and ‘good’ absorbers. This fact is frequently observed in single-dose kinetic studies whereas in long-term studies most of the subjects show significant, though highly variable responses. Thus, this discrimination of subjects based on plasma responses has been criticized since a lack of acute plasma response does not necessarily mean absence of absorption.

Studies of bioavailability of carotenoids, however, are difficult for the endogenous presence in plasma and tissues of carotenoids. In most cases, larger doses than those provided by mixed diets need to be supplied in order to observe variations in plasma. To overcome this problem stable iso-
tope-labelled carotenoids are being increasingly used to assess nutrient bioavailability [193]. In this regard, stable isotope labelling can be performed both intrinsically (in growing foods) and extrinsically (single compounds), allowing the study of carotenoid bioavailability (i.e. absorption, transport, distribution, storage, excretion, turn-over, ...) at dietary levels and regardless of endogenous presence.

These methods, however, have limitations (i.e. the perceived health risk and the costs associated with the necessary methodology). Because of these limitations, many studies have been performed using in vitro and animal models. Although animal models may provide relevant information with regard to bioavailability in man, no one animal model completely mimics human absorption and metabolism of carotenoids [194]. Extrapolation of these results and their relevance to humans should, therefore, be considered with caution.

In vitro models based on human physiology have been developed as simple, inexpensive and reproducible tools to study digestive stability, micellization, intestinal transport and metabolism and to predict the bioavailability of different food components. In vitro models have been used in studies on vitamin and carotenoid absorption mechanisms and, recently, models of in vitro digestion, micellarization and uptake by cell culture (Caco-2 cells) have been used as a model to assess carotenoid bioavailability from foods [195]. This approach is useful for studying preabsorptive processes and thus food related factors that affect bioavailability. Nonetheless, some type of standardization is needed and a wider use of these protocols will determine whether they are valid in predicting absorbability and/or bioavailability in humans.

Finally, an interesting alternative to estimate carotenoid bioavailability could be the evaluation of compartmental modelling that allows us to describe the absorption, redistribution and disposal of nutrients in the body [196, 197].

### 4.3 Tissue culture experiments for cellular uptake and metabolism

Although the intestinal uptake of carotenoids has been thought to occur by simple diffusion [198], recent studies have reported the existence of protein-mediated transport of carotenoids in enterocytes. Studies in Caco-2 cell monolayers indicate [199–201] that carotenoids and cholesterol could share common mechanistic pathways across the intestinal cell. In fact ezetimibe (EZ), an inhibitor of cholesterol transport as well as cholesterol itself inhibited (in a concentration-dependent manner) β-carotene transport, but did not affect retinol transport. This suggests that β-carotene and cholesterol interact during their transport through Caco-2 cells, and, therefore, nonpolar carotenoids and cholesterol share one (or more) common transporter(s). The scavenger receptor type B1 (SR-BI) was postulated to play a role in intestinal cholesterol [202, 203], and β-carotene absorption. In a similar manner, the putative proteins involved in the facilitated diffusion of carotenoids are identified in the Niemann-Pick C1Like 1(NPC1L1) and the adenosine triphosphate (ATP)-binding cassette (ABC) A1 transporter.

A similar in vitro system was proposed to study lutein absorption. Lutein was added to Caco-2 cell culture and the absorption of lutein was measured. The rate of transport of lutein micelles (lutein mixed with phospholipids, lysophospholipids, cholesterol, monoolein, oleic acid and taurocholate) was time- and concentration-dependent and was inhibited by coincubation with anti-SR-BI antibody and BLT1 (a leukotriene receptor). Coincubation with β-carotene, but not lycopene, decreased the lutein absorption rate (approx. 20%) significantly. These results suggest that lutein absorption is, at least partly, protein-mediated and that some lutein is taken up through SR-BI [204]. Although a binding protein specific to lycopene has not yet been verified, in vivo studies in rats suggested that one may exist. This could explain the preferential uptake of 14C-lycopene in some tissues [205]

Once the carotenoid is inside the enterocyte its fate depends on its structure. If the carotenoid contains an unsubstituted β-ionone ring with a polyene side-chain of at least 11 carbon atoms, it can be cleaved enzymatically to vitamin A. This central cleavage pathway, which requires molecular oxygen, is catalysed by the enzyme carotenoid 15,15'-monooxygenase, and yields two molecules of (all-E)-retinal from (all-E) β-carotene. This enzyme apparently cleaves (9Z) β-carotene also, yielding a 1:1 mixture of (all-E) and (9Z) retinal, which can be further oxidized to (9Z) retinoic acid. The (9Z) and (all-E) isomers of β-carotene can also be interconverted [206].

The second pathway of β-carotene metabolism is the eccentric cleavage, which occurs at double bonds other than the central 15,15'-double bond of the polyene chain of β-carotene to produce β-apo-carotenals with different chain lengths. However, given that only trace amounts of apocarotenals are detected in in vivo treatment [207] and that they can be formed nonenzymatically from β-carotene auto-oxidation [208], the existence of this pathway has been the subject of debate. The two major sites of β-carotene conversion in humans are the intestine and liver. By direct determination of β-carotene oxygenase activity in human small intestine and liver samples, it was estimated that in a human adult the maximum capacity for β-carotene cleavage by the two tissues would be 12 mg β-carotene per day [209]; this amount is much higher than the observed average daily intake of 1.5 mg per day in the United States or even the higher daily intake of 6 mg β-carotene/day suggested by some authors as being needed to meet the goal of 90% of vitamin A intake [210].

Very little is known about cellular events that regulate or facilitate the incorporation of carotenoids into lymphatic lipoproteins. Still unresolved is how the flow of hydrophobic
carotenoids within the enterocyte is controlled. The poor solubility of carotenoids in aqueous solutions suggests the need for a cytosolic binding protein, but to date no specific binding protein for carotenoids in the intestinal mucosa has been reported. Under normal dietary conditions both the retinyl esters formed from carotenoids in the enterocyte and the intact absorbed carotenoids are incorporated into lymphatic chylomicron [211].

4.4 Human studies

The wide presence of carotenoids in foods has attracted the researchers’ attention towards human intervention studies. Up till now, many papers have been published in this area and, considering the wide variety of parameters and factors evaluated, it becomes quite difficult to be exhaustive in the description of so many aspects of carotenoid bioavailability.

In the EPIC study [212], a typical population groups study, the mean of the sum of the six measured carotenoids (β-carotene, β-cryptoxanthin, α-carotene, lycopene, lutein and zeaxanthin) varied two-fold between regions in men and women (1.35 μmol/L for men in Malmö vs. 2.79 μmol/L for men in Ragusa/Naples; 1.61 μmol/L for women in The Netherlands vs. 3.52 μmol/L for women in Ragusa/Naples). Women had higher plasma levels of carotenoids than men, except in the case of lycopene. This is in agreement with data reported earlier [74, 213]. Mean carotenoid levels in plasma, in population groups of several regions, showed broader distributions: Italian regions, Athens and UK vegetarians had the highest lycopene and lutein levels while β-carotene and α-carotene were highest among UK vegetarians and β-cryptoxanthin levels were higher in the Spanish regions [212].

Supplementation studies represent another way to test the carotenoids bioavailability in humans; within a multicentre study, serum responses to carotenoid supplementation (lutein, lycopene or α-carotene + β-carotene) were assessed in a randomized, placebo-controlled intervention study [214]. The trial involved 400 apparently healthy men and women (40 men, 40 women/region) from five European regions (France, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, The Netherlands and Spain) and it was conducted using identical time protocols (16 months), capsule preparations and very similar doses (approx. 15 mg carotenoids), allowing relative comparisons between each carotenoid treatment. In addition, the centralization, randomization and quality control of analysis eliminate interlaboratory analytical bias and improve reliability of the results. Carotenoid supplementation was set at dietary achievable levels and then, the supplement of α- and β-carotene supplied an amount equivalent to that contained in 100 g cooked carrots; lutein amount was similar to that present in 200 g cooked spinach and lycopene was equivalent to that provided by 600 g raw tomato or 100 g tomato paste. Data from this study showed that supplementation with α + β-carotene (carotene-rich palm-oil) resulted in a 14- and 5-fold increase in serum levels respectively. Supplementation with lutein (from marigold extracts) elevated serum lutein (about five-fold), zeaxanthin (about double) and ketocarotenoids (not supplied), whereas lycopene supplementation (derived from tomato paste) resulted in a two-fold increase in serum lycopene. Isomer distribution of β-carotene and lycopene in serum remains constant regardless of the isomer composition in the capsules. In Spanish volunteers, additional data [215] showed that serum response to carotenoid supplementation reached a plateau after 4 wks of supplementation whereas no significant side-effects (except carotenodermia) nor changes in biochemical or haematological indices were observed. The presence of a chromatographic peak (tentatively identified as lutein monopalmitate) was only detected in subjects with relatively high serum lutein levels (>1.05 μmol/L). This peak may be indicative of a ceiling effect on saturation of the transport capacity of lutein, which may be re-esterified in vivo when it is supplied in excess of normal dietary intake [214, 215].

A lot of human epidemiological studies suggest a protective effect of diets rich in carotenoids, composed mainly of fruit and vegetables, against cancers at various sites. In contrast, intervention studies with higher concentrations of synthetic β-carotene more available than that in fruit and vegetables, have failed to provide the expected protection [216–221]. In addition, β-carotene is an important antioxidant in our daily diet which might be significant for health promoting even if its role for disease prevention is still not clear. Concerning lycopene, a correlation between lycopene derived from tomato products supplementation and risk of prostate cancer, was reported by Basu and Imrhan [222] in a recent review of 20 studies, even if future investigations are required to clarify the lycopene role and its action mechanism.

These results suggest that at present there is still insufficient evidence to advocate the consumption of isolated carotenoids for prevention of several chronic diseases [79, 223–227]. In fact, data collected with the same methodology, comparable and representing a large number of population are required to quantify the intake of carotenoids and to represent the consumption of the population.

5 Concluding remarks

Carotenoids are a wide variety of molecules present in the human diet so our review is extensive and covers different aspects. The main dietary sources of carotenoids were reviewed. We have tried to summarize positive and negative effects of food processing, storage, cooking on carotenoid bioavailability. In particular, we have evidenced the possibility to improve carotenoids bioavailability in accordance with changes and variations of technology procedures.
We focused our attention on several factors influencing carotenoid accumulation and bioavailability and on the potential health properties and possible biological role of these phytochemicals in human physiology.

The metabolism, absorption and excretion of carotenoids have been studied extensively in vitro, in animal models and in humans.

Although a lot of literature data are available for the design and interpretation of intervention studies [228, 229], further investigations are required to understand the absorption and metabolism pathways and the action mechanism of carotenoids in humans. From this point of view, this paper could be a useful updated knowledge for both expert and not expert readers. It also highlights the need for further research with appropriate approaches (i.e. dietary intake evaluation, development and update of a carotenoid database for different countries).

The authors are grateful to Editorial Office of British Journal of Nutrition to reuse the Tables 3, 4, 6 and 7.

The authors have declared no conflict of interest.

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