



“White Blush” on Cocktail Carrots

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Cocktail carrots are produced from larger carrots that have been processed to be made ready-to-eat. This normally involves removing the skin and cutting the carrot down to a standard size. Cocktail carrots are sometimes mistakenly referred to as baby carrots because of their small, uniform size.

When you buy cocktail carrots in the store, you might notice that there is sometimes a white colour on the carrots, which is sometimes called a “white blush”.

Stories have circulated on the Internet about this “white blush”, suggesting it is caused by chlorine on the surface of the carrot and that this could be a safety concern.

This white blush is not an indication that there is anything unsafe or unhealthy about the carrots, rather it is a sign that the surface of the carrot has dried out. Cocktail carrots are susceptible to drying out because the skin has been removed. You can try to temporarily remove the whiteness by simply soaking the carrots in water.

Manufacturers and processors will sometimes use a mild solution of water with small amounts of chlorine to remove any potentially harmful bacteria from the surface of fresh produce. This solution is immediately rinsed off using clean water and is not involved in producing the “white blush” in any way.



Health Canada considers that this practice can improve the safety of fresh produce when used appropriately.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has a Code of Practice

(<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/frefra/safsa/l/minproe.shtml#s15>) for minimally processed ready-to-eat vegetables, which includes specific guidance on the use of chlorinated wash water.

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