

Better health begins with nature



Seaweed – Pure Green Goodness!

By Lee-Ann Carrière, RHN, NNCP

Many of us know that leafy green foods are nutrient-dense powerhouses. They pack a lot of goodness considering their size and delicate nature. But of all the green foods, what in particular makes seaweed and sea vegetables uniquely good? Many pacific-based cultures have enjoyed their revitalizing benefits for many generations. Read more to find out.

Green foods are well-researched for their energizing benefits, and seaweed, often referred to as sea vegetables, fall well within this category. Chlorella, spirulina, and kelp are examples of a few varieties of seaweed that are commonly available for supplementation. Here are some of the key benefits of seaweed.

- **Trace Minerals**

Seaweed, such as chlorella, spirulina, and kelp, contain all 56 trace minerals essential to the body's physiological functions. Specifically, they are a good source of calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, chromium, and copper. Foods high in these minerals are alkalizing to the human body, which is helpful in balancing our typically acidic Standard North American Diet. Healthy pH levels assist in keeping chronic conditions at bay. Iodine is especially important for those who suffer from low thyroid function (hypothyroidism)

- **Chlorophyll**

Green plants contain a high concentration of chlorophyll, which supports the liver and promotes detoxification.

- **Anti-inflammatory Antioxidants**

Some species of seaweed also contain beta-carotene, an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory substance commonly found in foods with red or orange pigments. Antioxidants support healthy cell activity and slow the signs of aging.

- **Plant-Based Protein**

Sea vegetables contain plant-based amino acids, which are the substances that form protein. Plant-based sources of protein support alkalinity in the body and reduce inflammation.

- **Essential Fatty Acids**

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in greater concentration in seaweed versus any other green food! Omega-3s support healthy blood fats, cognitive and nervous system function, immune health, hormone synthesis, and reduce inflammation.

- **Ergosterol: A Pre-Cursor to Vitamin D**

A little-known fact about seaweed is that it contains a substance called ergosterol. Ergosterol converts to vitamin D in the body, and vitamin D has been shown to help prevent certain types of cancer. Additionally, vitamin D behaves as a hormone-like substance that balances calcium levels in the blood, contributing to bone density.

Symptoms typically associated with many chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and hypothyroidism may benefit from the therapeutic effects of seaweed. As always, it's best to check with your health care provider prior to consuming seaweed or beginning seaweed supplementation for symptoms or chronic conditions. Any of the staff at Ezentials would be happy to show you our existing selection of chlorella, spirulina, and kelp supplements, along with our new kelp noodles (see this month's recipe for more details).

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In addition to the internal benefits of seaweed, using seaweed and its extracts on the skin can improve skin hydration and elasticity, reduce inflammation and cellulite, replenish skin nutrients, soothe, detoxify, tone, and firm. Our skin is our largest organ and it is certainly worthy of a nourishing and purifying oceanic treat. Be sure to ask any of the staff at Ezentials about our specialized seaweed beauty treatments such as our Seaweed Pedicure (available for the month of July only), the Detox Delight Spa Package featuring our Seaweed Body Wrap, and any of the products from the Seaflora Wild Organic Seaweed Skincare, harvested and made in Canada.

Hope to “sea” you soon!

Lee-Ann Carrière

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