

The Incredible Health Benefits



I have to admit...

the thought of eating a plate of slimy green stuff from the ocean just does not usually get people jumping for joy and anticipation! Except for the occasional seaweed salad or sushi at a Japanese restaurant, the exposure to sea vegetables for the average Westerner is quite small. Too bad! Sea vegetables are amongst the most nutritionally powerful foods on the planet. And with a bit of creativity and experimentation, wonderfully delicious dishes can be prepared from them! They are simple to prepare and serve and can add fun and diversity to your daily culinary repertoire.

Most Americans do get a bit of sea vegetation on a regular basis, as food manufacturers often use processed sea vegetables in the form of sodium alginate and carageenan as thickeners and stabilizers in a variety of common food products such as ice cream, instant pudding, almond milk, and toothpaste and are not of significant nutritional value. However, served as part of main meals and in salads, soups and wraps, sea vegetables offer an abundance of otherwise hard to get nutrients.

Sea vegetables are very rich in nutrients and phytochemicals. They are loaded with chlorophyll, fiber, and minerals, including significant amounts of sodium, potassium, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, iron, iodine and many other trace minerals naturally found in the ocean. When reconstituted, sea vegetables expand three to seven times their original volume, so small amounts go a long way.

Available in dried form year-round, most sea vegetables are re-hydrated before adding to dishes. Some, like kelp, dulse, nori and sea palm are delicate enough to eat dry. Others, like arame, wakame and hijiki become more tender and appealing when they are soaked in water to soften. Irish moss can be soaked and used as a thickener in puddings, pies and gravies. Still others like Kombu are usually not eaten by themselves, because they are tougher, but are either ground and used as a seasoning or used whole as a flavoring in soups and stews.

To make a basic sea vegetable salad, simply soak the sea vegetables in water to soften. Drain, reserving the soak water for future use. I usually do equal amounts of sea and land vegetation, like carrots or cucumbers. Kale, collard greens and cabbage make great additions as well. Combine the sea vegetable with the land vegetable and pour a sauce or marinade over them. Let it stand at least 15 minutes to absorb flavor. One of my favorite marinades contains ginger, garlic, sesame oil, lime juice, cayenne and salt. While there are thousands of different types of sea vegetables, a small handful are most commonly used. The sweet, mild flavors of arame, dulse and bullwhip kelp make them perfect choices for the novice.

Benefits of Sea Vegetables

Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo

Minerals, Trace Elements, Vitamins and Fats in Sea Vegetables

Sea vegetables provide all 56 minerals and trace elements required for the human body's physiological functions in quantities greatly exceeding those of land plants. According to Dr. Ryan Drum, noted herbalist and sea vegetable gatherer, and an international expert on sea vegetables, 3-5 pounds of sea vegetables will fully mineralize an adult human for one year! He claims his personal consumption to be about 10 pounds a year.

A 1/3 cup (1/4 oz.) serving of Dulse or Kelp provides up to 30% of the RDA for iron, which is 4 times the amount of iron in a serving of spinach. Magnesium is twice as abundant in Kelp and Alaria as in collard greens. Sea vegetables contain the following essential nutrients in a chelated, colloidal, optimally balanced, bioavailable form: Calcium, Magnesium, Potassium, Sodium, Iron, Chromium, Copper, Lithium, Manganese, Selenium, Vanadium, Sulfur, and Iodine. Sea vegetables are the best natural food sources of

iodine. According to Dr. Drum, since no land plants are reliable sources of dietary iodine, you'd have to eat about 40 lb. of fresh vegetables and/or fruits to get as much iodine as you would from 1 gram of whole leaf kelp! Sea vegetables also contain significant amounts of vitamins, especially the B vitamins. And finally, while low in fat, sea vegetables have significant amounts of Omega-3 fatty acids, containing an ideal ratio of Omega-6 and Omega-3.

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Healing Properties of Sea Vegetables

Sea vegetables have been studied and used in clinical practice and shown to have many health benefits. For example, the effects of regular Kombu consumption can be resolution of coronary artery disease, healthier liver function, higher metabolic rate, faster food transit time, lower LDL cholesterol, and higher HDL cholesterol blood levels. What follows is a summary of some of the healing effects that have been attributed to sea vegetables.

- **Anti-Microbial Function:** Sea vegetables are powerfully antiviral and anti-parasitic. Various red algae, dried, powdered and encapsulated have been used as effective genital herpes and shingles suppressants.
- **Lung Function:** Hijiki and Sargassum, brown algae, seem to improve lung capacity. 3-5 grams of powdered kelp daily has been effective in treating asthma. Irish Moss gel is an effective long-term treatment for damaged lungs, especially after pneumonia, smoking, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis.
- **Erectile Dysfunction:** Tropical species of red seaweed are used to prepare a male virility drink in the Caribbean.
- **Tissue Repair:** Dr. Ryan Drum uses a broth of powdered Sargassum unpasteurized 3 year old Barley Miso paste for cancer, radiation, chemotherapy, post-surgical, and whole body impact trauma patients. Pre surgical treatment with 3-5 grams of brown seaweed containing Fucoidan significantly reduces blood loss and shock risk afterwards.
- **Nervous Disorders:** Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Insomnia, Depression, Hostility and Schizophrenia have improved greatly with regular daily consumption of 3-5 grams of powdered kelp.
- **Cardiovascular Disorders:** Regular consumption of Kombu tends to result in lowered blood pressure and decrease in arterial plaque.
- **Cancer:** Regular dietary consumption of WakaAme and other brown algae may prevent breast cancer. One of the constituents of brown algae, Fucoidan, shows strong antitumor activity by enhancement of inflammatory responses.
- **Thyroid Disorders:** Fucus species of brown seaweeds, also known as Bladderwrack, have been used as treatment for thyroid disorders because they contain DIT, a weakly active thyroid hormone. Two DIT molecules combine to produce T4, Thyroxine. 3-5 grams daily of powdered Fucus, results in similar effects to thyroid medication. Up to 10% of the iodine found in brown seaweeds, especially laminaria species of Kombu and Sargassum has been found to be in the preformed thyroid hormones, T4 and T3. This is exciting news for those who have been on synthetic thyroid hormone and told that they needed to stay on it for life. Daily consumption of sea vegetables has the potential to restore thyroid functioning.
- **Male Pattern Baldness:** Daily Nori consumption is recommended in Japan as a preventative for male pattern baldness.
- **Joint Pain:** Used topically, extended soaks with powdered Fucus (bladder wrack) can be very helpful to improve joint pain.

Other conditions that have been found to respond favorably with the use of sea vegetables are anemia, arthritis, diabetes, chronic fatigue, yeast infections, ulcers, and prostate problems.

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If I haven't yet convinced you to incorporate sea vegetables into your daily food plan, perhaps you need to learn more. I encourage you to experiment. Irish moss makes a great pudding. Nori makes a great wrap. Dulse and bullwhip kelp are easy to eat as a snack. Arame makes a great salad. Add a handful of soaked sea vegetables to a nut or seed pate, cracker or dehydrated veggie burger recipe. Put some into a blended soup or smoothie. Target to eat one half to one ounce a week to start. If you have any of the problems listed above, it may benefit you to increase your consumption to 5 grams a day. Read Dr. Ryan Drum's work for more details on some of the research, www.ryandrum.com. Google a search for Raw Sea vegetable for more recipe ideas. A number of books are now available. Check the Living Health website, www.elivinghealth for the status of our soon to be released e-book, containing lots of practical information on how to eat and enjoy the delicious bounty from the sea.

References

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Of Land and Sea

Serves 2

Ingredients:

1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
1/2 avocado, chopped
2 roma tomatoes, diced
1/2 C sun-dried tomatoes, chopped fine
3 mint leaves, minced
3 basil leaves, minced
1 T flax oil
juice of 1 lime
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
2 T snipped chives
2 T hemp seeds or sesame seeds
pinch of sea salt

6 oz. fresh mixed sea vegetables, combined with your favorite salad greens

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients. Toss gently to mix well. Enjoy.

Dr Ritamarie Loscalzo is a licensed Chiropractor, Certified in Acupuncture, a Certified Clinical Nutritionist, a Diplomat of the American Board of Clinical Nutrition, a licensed HeartMath® one on one provider, a certified Living on Live Foods Chef, Instructor and Teacher, and is in training to become a Certified Herbalist. She has a passion for making super nutritious foods taste super delicious, and she has learned to incorporate the bounty of the sea in all kinds of delicious recipes. She began her relationship with raw and living vegan foods almost 22 years ago, after a struggle with illness brought her to research and begin to understand the relationship between diet and health. She has a passion for inspiring and motivating people towards reaching their health potential, while providing the support and education to empower long term changes. She is available for one on one on one or group coaching, live or by telephone, living foods preparation classes, and as a motivational speaker. You can contact her at DrRitamarie@DrRitamarie.com or learn more about the services and classes she offers at <http://www.DrRitamarie.com>

