

"To the ancient Greeks, the image of Aphrodite rising out of the sea was beautiful because of the nutrients that the sea plants had given her," says Linda Page, ND, in *Healthy Healing* (Healthy Healing Publications).

Today, sea plants still provide beauty benefits. "They have a complete spectrum of chelated minerals, which makes them easier to absorb, that add lustre and shine to your hair and eyes and improve skin texture and tone."

Thalassotherapy (seawater treatment) includes using salts, mud, foliage, sand and water from the sea to stimulate, hydrate and nourish the skin, making it smoother, firmer and more resilient.

"Using sea products in treatments is both restorative and detoxifying," says Galvez. "Now with modern technology, you don't have to live anywhere near the sea to take advantage of the wonderful health and wellness benefits. Your sea retreat is only as close as your health food store."

### Seaweed's Beauty Benefits

"Pollution, stress, fatigue and bad eating habits all affect the body," says Anne Mok, LaC, a certified Chinese herbalist and co-owner of Cornerstone Healing in Brooklyn, New York. This leads to vitamin and mineral deficiencies that can result in broken capillaries, loss of firmness, skin lesions, dry scaliness and more.

The good news, Mok says, is since seaweed is packed with easy-to-absorb proteins, vitamins, minerals and lipids, it can protect against environmental pollution and ward off aging by nourishing and moisturizing the skin. "The seawater in seaweed is similar to human plasma, so it's an ideal way to get the nutritive benefits from the sea, vitamins A, C and E, and the minerals zinc, selenium and magnesium we need through the process of osmosis. Seaweed cleanses, tones and soothes the skin and regenerates body tissues, offering a new vitality and helping to maintain a youthful

appearance. It also improves circulation, which has a positive effect on local fatty overloads and helps maintain the tone of the tissue." No wonder seaweed is used to firm the skin and reduce the appearance of cellulite!

Seaweed captures all the richness from the sea. "There is no genetic manipulation, fertilizer or pesticides, just the sea, light and the tides," says Mok. "[S]eaweed is ten times richer in trace elements than land plants."

Beauty aids from the sea include:

- Kelp (laminaria), a large leafy brown algae, grows along cold climate



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coastlines and can bring a healthy glow to skin. "Kelp powder has exfoliating properties that make it a great addition to a facial mask," Galvez adds. "It increases blood circulation and stimulates lymph production to eliminate toxins. It's also a mineral-rich body scrub for removing surface impurities."

- Crushed algae is often used in seaweed masks.

- Carrageenan, a gel extracted from Irish sea moss, is commonly used as a cosmetic thickening agent. "It's a great moisturizer that holds nutrients and water in," says Mok.

- Bladderwrack (fucus), a brown seaweed, is often used in cellulite-reducing creams to eliminate excess fluid from the skin.

### A Seaweed Beauty Routine

Incorporating the benefits of seaweed into your beauty routine is easy.

You can "purchase dehydrated seaweed at a natural food store to make your bath a mini-ocean," says Janice Cox, author of *Natural Beauty at Home* (Henry Holt & Co).

"Fill the tub to the point that you're covered when you lie down," says Dr. Page. "The idea is to make your body sweat, to open your pores, release toxins and take in the sea nutrient benefits by osmosis. Boost the effect with a few drops of aromatherapy bath oils like rosemary and lavender. It'll help hold the heat in and improve your cleansing program."

Rinse off and "you'll feel your skin tighten, due to the high iodine content of the seaweed," says Cox. "Your skin should also feel softer and firmer."

Seaweed and algae body wraps are ideal ways to beautify the skin, rid your body of toxins and boost well-being and health. "It starts a program of detoxification very rapidly," says Dr. Page, who has also written *Detoxification: All You Need to Know* (Healthy Healing Publications). "It's amazing how it encourages weight loss and cellulite reduction."

"Seaweed wraps are the most effective cellulite treatments," says Mok. "Seaweed and seaweed mud, especially, stimulate the cells to improve cellular activity and increase the efficiency of lymphatic fluid, which helps break down toxic deposits that can result in cellulite."

"It's excellent conditioning for the skin and leaves it soft and glowing," says Claudia Spagnolo, spa director for the DeFranco Spagnolo Salon and Day Spa in Great Neck, New York.

### Revitalize With Sea Salts

Sea salts contain minerals—such as calcium, potassium, magnesium, sodium, iron, sulphur, phosphorus and chlorine—that have a delightfully rejuvenating and revitalizing effect on skin.