# The Health Benefits of Seaweed: A Nutrient-Rich Source of Iodine for Skin (and Sex Drive!)



Seaweed is often overlooked as a source of health benefits despite being highly nutritious. It provides essential nutrients including fibre, omega-3 fats, and key amino acids, as well as vitamins A, B, C, and E—nutrients not commonly found in land vegetables.

One of seaweed’s significant advantages is its natural iodine content, vital for thyroid hormone production, which regulates metabolism and bodily processes. Low thyroid hormone levels can lead to issues such as low energy, constipation, and weight gain.

Countries like the US and Canada fortify table salt with iodine to prevent deficiency, a practice not followed in the UK. As a result, the World Health Organisation categorizes the UK as one of the top ten most iodine-deficient nations.

According to nutritionist and chartered psychologist, Dr. Naomi Newman-Beinart, incorporating seaweed into a diet offers multiple health benefits. Dr. Newman-Beinart identifies several key benefits:

**Increase Libido**: Seaweed can enhance sexual function and energy levels, thanks to its high iodine content which supports thyroid hormone production.

**Prevent Dry, Flaky Skin**: Adequate thyroid hormone levels, influenced by iodine intake, help skin cells regenerate, preventing dryness and flakiness.

**Promote Healthy Hair Growth**: Thyroid hormones play a role in hair follicle growth. Iodine deficiency, leading to low hormone levels, may result in hair loss.

**Boost Brain Power**: Iodine deficiency has been linked to lower IQ and poorer memory performance.

**Support Child Intelligence**: Iodine deficiency during pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of mental impairment in children. The WHO recommends sufficient iodine levels during pregnancy to support brain development.

Dr. Newman-Beinart emphasizes the importance of seaweed as a natural iodine source to address these health concerns.