

*naturally

by MATTHEW KADEY, M.Sc., R.D.


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kelp wanted

If you eschew fish and dairy, you could be coming up short in iodine, according to researchers at Boston University School of Medicine. A deficiency can spiral into hypothyroidism (leading to weight gain, fatigue and impaired brain function). Those at risk should consider taking a supplement that provides the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) of 150 micrograms a day of iodine (pregnant and nursing moms need 220 micrograms daily). Or add seaweed to your diet: Mix dried nori or wakame into grain-based salads or use as a topping for soba noodles.



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thyroid fat trap!

appeared that some of these toxins attached to receptors in thyroid tissue and blunted the signals that cause the gland to produce thyroid hormone," explains Dr. Dean, who began checking for—and treating—yeast overgrowth in her own patients after learning about the finding. What she witnessed: "People with thyroid problems would do much better when their yeast overgrowth was addressed—their thyroid function improved dramatically once yeast was under control."

Sluggish thyroid promotes yeast

Researchers have known for more than a century that the thyroid gland plays a key role in metabolism, since the hormones it produces regulate energy use in every cell of the body. But they now realize that the gland also plays a crucial role in keeping the immune system operating at its peak. A recent animal study published in the journal *Current Immunology Reviews* confirmed that immune-system responses dropped in subjects as their thyroid function faltered. (Some health experts theorize that lower body temperature, which is a classic symptom of an underactive thyroid, plays a role in reduced immune-system activity.)

That dip in immunity, Dr. Dean points out, can pull women even deeper into the yeast-thyroid trap: "When thyroid slowdowns cause the body's immune-system defenses to falter, yeast infections are more likely to take hold and intensify."

Add to this the fact that both low thyroid and yeast overgrowth trigger fatigue, and the vicious cycle takes full shape. "Fatigue causes you to

crave sugar for a quick hit of energy, but it's a false fix because yeast loves sugar and grows like crazy when given it," explains Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., coauthor of *Real Cause, Real Cure*. "So now you have more yeast, which worsens fatigue. When you consider these factors, it's easy to see how each problem—yeast and low thyroid—intensifies the other in what often becomes a worsening spiral."

Nature's double-whammy cure

A growing number of health professionals have started to address yeast overgrowth and sluggish thyroid simultaneously to help women break free from this health-sabotaging cycle once and for all. What the experts are discovering: A superfood from the ocean that has been a dietary staple for generations of Japanese women is emerging as a standout natural remedy.

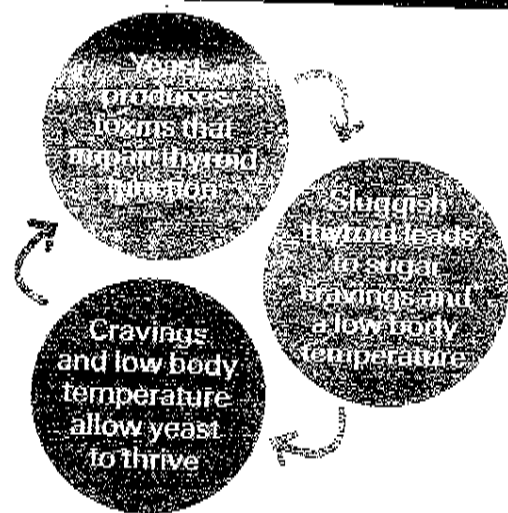
Sea vegetables have long been recognized for their ability to nourish the thyroid, thanks largely to their high content of iodine. Over the past 50 years, levels of this mineral have plunged by more than 50 percent in modern-day diets, leaving the majority of American women lacking, Dr. Teitelbaum asserts. That's a real problem since iodine is vital for the production of metabolism-regulating thyroid hormones. "Thyroid hormone is basically three or four iodine molecules attached to an amino acid called *tyrosine*," he explains. "The body simply can't make the thyroid

hormone it needs without the proper supply of iodine."

Iodine's benefits extend beyond thyroid function—the mineral also has a study-backed ability to kill *Candida* and was actually a go-to treatment for yeast infections before the advent of antifungal drugs. Dr. Dean explains, "Iodine has an antiseptic action that's effective against a variety of infectious organisms, including *Candida*."

Relying on iodine to treat a sluggish thyroid and yeast overgrowth can be tricky, though: Despite the fact that iodine is essential for healthy function of the gland, consuming too much can cause or worsen thyroid-hormone imbalances in susceptible individuals (especially those with autoimmune thyroid disorders). But enjoying moderate amounts of seaweed is a strategy that appears to provide a built-in safety net against iodine excess. As Dr. Teitelbaum explains, "Seaweed has been eaten daily in Japanese cultures for centuries without problems." ▶

THE VICIOUS CYCLE MAKING WOMEN FAT



Turn for your slimming strategy