

Seaweed Could Hold Key to Natural Weight Loss

By Sherry Baker, Health Sciences Editor, Natural News – April 7, 2010

Scientists at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom have discovered a substance that reduces fat uptake in the body by more than 75 percent. This potential obesity fighter isn't a drug but a natural substance found in seaweed.

The research team, headed by Dr. Iain Brownlee and Professor Jeff Pearson, tested more than 60 different fibers in the laboratory to see how effective they were in absorbing fat. The results? The scientists found that **alginate**, a natural fiber in sea kelp, **blocks the body from absorbing fat far more effectively than anti-obesity treatments** currently sold over the counter.

"There are countless claims about miracle cures for weight loss but only a few cases offer any sound scientific evidence to back up these claims," Dr. Brownlee said in a press statement. "The aim of this study was to put these products to the test and our initial findings are that **alginates significantly reduce fat digestion.**"

The Newcastle University findings were presented March 22 at the American Chemical Society Spring meeting in San Francisco. Dr. Brownlee announced that he and his colleagues now plan to recruit volunteers and study whether the effects they have found in the lab can be reproduced in real people. They also want to see if they can come up with tasty, healthy foods that incorporate the seafood ingredient.

"This suggests that if we can add the natural fiber to products commonly eaten daily – such as bread, biscuits and yogurts – up to three quarters of the fat contained in that meal could simply pass through the body," Dr. Brownlee stated. "We have already added the alginate to bread and initial taste tests have been extremely encouraging. Now the next step is to carry out clinical trials to find out how effective they are when eaten as part of a normal diet."

Alginates from seaweed are already commonly used in very small amounts in many foods as thickeners and stabilizers. When the seafood extract was added to bread as part of a blind taste test, Dr. Brownlee said the alginate bread actually scored higher for texture and richness than a standard white loaf.

"Obesity is an ever-growing problem and many people find it difficult to stick to diet and exercise plans in order to lose weight," Dr. Brownlee said in the press statement.

"Alginates not only have great potential for weight management – adding them to food also has the added advantage of boosting overall fiber content."

This is important because foods high in fiber have been shown in numerous studies not only to help in weight control, but also to reduce the risk for colon cancer.

For more information: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/press.office/press.release/item/seaweed-to-tackle-rising-tide-of-obesity> and http://www.naturalnews.com/028525_seaweed_weight_loss.html

[Note to weight watchers: Alginates make up a full 50% of each capsule of Modifilan!]