Salts of Earth and Sea

Tonic for your whole body

Caroline Csiki, CHNP | Photo by Scott Yavis

Salt may be as important to health as those eight glasses of water we should drink each day. Sound far-fetched? Well, natural sea salt—evaporated from seawater—contains numerous minerals that are as essential to health as water.

While common table salt is mainly sodium chloride, natural sea salt is a source of trace minerals, including iodine, iron, copper, zinc, manganese, cobalt, and selenium. In contrast, refined salt is an incomplete food and consumption can lead to nutritional deficiencies. For those striving toward a healthy diet, sea salt is a nourishing whole food.

Sea salt also has natural healing properties. It helps the body replace lost electrolytes and balance pH levels. It regulates muscle contraction, especially that of the heart, and stimulates the liver and the production of digestive acids. The iodine in sea salt is paramount for thyroid gland function.

Sea Salt Soak

Salt bath therapy, used to treat skin and inflammatory diseases such as arthritis, has its roots in ancient Greece. The renowned herbalist, Paracelsus (1493 to 1541), promoted its antiseptic and antibacterial qualities during the Renaissance.

A variety of natural bath salts are available in most health food stores, with an array of potential uses for home health care. Those suffering from chronic skin problems such as psoriasis or eczema can add Dead Sea salt to bathwater to create a soothing soak, while those with colds or respiratory tract infections can inhale salt water steam to ease breathing difficulties. Brushing your teeth with sea salt is great for oral hygiene and bleeding gums. Due to its detoxifying abilities, sea salt and baking soda baths have been used as treatment for radiation exposure, as in the case of cancer patients.

Salt in Trade

French fleur de sel, black Hawaiian volcanic salt, red Bolivian rock salt—these gourmet salts are the seasoning of choice for top chefs. A relative newcomer on the salt scene is Himalayan pink. Its crystals originate from a 250-million-year-old Jurassic era sea source and are considered to be the healing salt par excellence.

Are you ready to reap the many health benefits of sea salt? Make your own supersaturated salt elixir, also known as sole (soh-lay)(see sidebar). Take 1 teaspoon (5 mL) of sole in 1 cup (250 mL) of spring water on an empty stomach each morning and discover for yourself that salt is indeed, the new water.

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