The Seaweed Wrap

Spa Treatment of the Month by Laura Allen

Seaweed is one of the great gifts of nature, rich in micronutrients, amino acids, vitamins, mineral salts and essential oils. Seaweed for spa use is available in a variety of forms: mud, dried powder, gel and dehydrated whole seaweed, wonderful for a long bath. Seaweed “mud” is made by mixing seaweed with clay; dried powder is seaweed that’s pulverized and rehydrates when mixed with water. Seaweed is very high in alginate, a natural gel. In addition to nutritional value, most forms of seaweed have that faint, pleasant smell of the ocean—just enough to conjure up visions of lapping waves and swaying palm trees. Note that seaweed is contraindicated for clients allergic to iodine.

Ingredients and Equipment:
- Heat-reflecting blanket
- Plastic body sheet
- Beach towel (continue that seaweed theme!) for the client to lay on
- Beach towel for draping and drying the client at the end of treatment
- Warmer filled with water
- Soft body brush
- Ten to 12 compression bandages (approximate, will vary by client’s body size)
- Approximately one-half cup of the seaweed product of your choice
- If you don’t have a shower or wet room, you’ll need several clean hand towels to use for wiping off the seaweed at the end of the wrap. Keep them in the warm water while the client is wrapped. The gel comes off with the least amount of mess.

Procedure:
1. Place the heat-reflecting side of the thermal blanket face up, draped lengthwise across the sides of the table, so it will make a good wrap on the client.
2. Lay the plastic body sheet on top of the thermal blanket and put a beach towel on top, so the client doesn’t stick to the plastic.
3. Dry brush the client first to exfoliate the skin, then apply the seaweed.
4. Have the client stand while you wrap the torso and hips securely with the compression bandages, then have her lie supine while you wrap the extremities.
5. Wrap the client securely in the plastic sheet and thermal blanket. Let the client nap for 30 minutes while the wrap causes a sweat.
6. Unwrap the client, using the dry bath towel as a drape, remove the compression bandages and either send the client to shower or wipe the seaweed off with the warm towels.

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