



## **Accurate Clinic**

2401 Veterans Memorial Blvd. Suite 16  
Kenner, LA 70062 - 4799  
Phone: 504.472.6130 Fax: 504.472.6128

[www.AccurateClinic.com](http://www.AccurateClinic.com)

## **Accurate Education**

### ***Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)***

## **Sea Moss**

Sea moss (commonly referring to red seaweeds such as *Chondrus crispus* and *Gracilaria* spp.) is recognized as a nutraceutical supplement due to its high content of minerals (notably iodine), vitamins, polysaccharides, and bioactive compounds with antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antidiabetic properties. However, robust clinical efficacy data in humans are limited, and most evidence is preclinical or based on traditional use and compositional analysis.

Multiple reviews highlight that seaweeds, including sea moss, are nutrient-dense and contain compounds with potential health benefits such as improved immune function, metabolic health, and chronic disease prevention. Specific activities attributed to sea moss and other seaweeds include antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, and antimicrobial effects, largely supported by *in vitro* and animal studies rather than large human trials. A recent meta-analysis found that seaweed supplementation (including brown and red algae) can improve postprandial blood glucose and HbA1c, with higher doses ( $\geq 1000$  mg/day) showing greater benefit, though most studies did not focus specifically on sea moss.

### **Recommended Doses**

Typical recommended doses for sea moss supplementation are not standardized in the medical literature. Commercial products often suggest 1–4 grams of dried sea moss per day, which aligns with safety data for iodine intake: 4 grams/day of dehydrated Irish moss (*Chondrus crispus*) provides about 25% of the recommended daily iodine intake for children and is considered safe for adults, but excessive intake (e.g.,  $>286$  g/day) risks exceeding the upper limit for iodine and may cause thyroid dysfunction. The mineral content, especially iodine, varies widely by species and source, so dosing should be approached cautiously, especially in populations at risk for thyroid disease.

### **In Summary:**

- Sea moss is a promising nutraceutical due to its nutrient and bioactive profile, with potential benefits for metabolic, immune, and chronic disease health, but human clinical efficacy data are limited.
- Typical supplementation is 1–4 g dried sea moss daily; higher doses risk excessive iodine intake.
- More rigorous human trials are needed to establish efficacy, optimal dosing, and long-term safety.

## Human Clinical Trials

Human clinical trials specifically investigating sea moss (*Chondrus crispus*, *Gracilaria* spp.) supplementation as a nutraceutical are extremely limited; most available clinical data focus on other seaweed species or on extracted polysaccharides, rather than whole sea moss. The majority of evidence for sea moss comes from compositional analysis, preclinical studies, and traditional use, with only a few human studies on related seaweed polysaccharides.

A recent review of the literature confirms that while seaweeds—including sea moss—are widely recognized for their nutritional and bioactive properties, there is a lack of robust human intervention studies directly assessing clinical efficacy and safety for sea moss itself. Most clinical trials have focused on brown seaweeds (e.g., *Ascophyllum nodosum*, *Fucus vesiculosus*) or on purified polysaccharides from green algae (e.g., *Ulva* sp.), rather than red seaweeds like sea moss.

### Design and outcomes of relevant human studies:

- The most directly relevant clinical studies have used oral supplementation of algal sulfated polysaccharides (not specifically sea moss) in overweight adults, with doses of 2–4 g/day for 6–12 weeks. These randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trials reported improvements in plasma lipids, reductions in inflammatory markers (CRP, cytokines), and favorable shifts in gut microbiota, but did not assess sea moss specifically.
- Trials of brown seaweed supplementation (5 g/day for 5 weeks) in patients with type 2 diabetes found no significant effect on average blood glucose levels, and safety was acceptable with no serious adverse events.
- Reviews consistently note that **safety concerns for seaweed supplements center on iodine excess and potential heavy metal contamination**, but clinical trials using moderate doses (1–4 g/day) have not reported significant adverse effects.

### Summary:

- No large, high-quality human clinical trials have directly evaluated sea moss supplementation for clinical endpoints.
- Most human data are extrapolated from studies of other seaweeds or their polysaccharides, which show potential benefits for metabolic and inflammatory markers at doses of 2–5 g/day, with good short-term safety.
- Further research is needed to establish the clinical efficacy, optimal dosing, and long-term safety of sea moss as a nutraceutical supplement in humans.

**Caution:** Monitor for iodine excess and potential heavy metal contamination, as seaweeds can accumulate toxic elements.

**For more information** and links to online resources for Sea Moss, follow the QR codes below:



Sea Moss



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