

How and why AFA (Aphanizomenon flos-aquae), otherwise known as Blue Green Algae can help you

The Kalmath Lake AFA's most healthful source is situated in Oregon, America. The area is a true haven, nestled between 3 of America's Natural Parks, Crater Lake National Park to the north, Winema National Forest to the east, and the Cascade Mountains to the west.

The lake contains about 30ft of mineral-rich sediment as a result of ancient volcanic activity thus providing a very unique growth medium for the AFA.

It is a sanctuary for many types of wildlife and remains untouched by humankind . It has a deeply spiritual feel, and has to be visited, if only by means of photographs!

At first thought the idea of eating algae may seem rather strange. It is important to clarify that there are only a very few strains of algae that are in fact toxic, and AFA is entirely safe, and very carefully collected and prepared. It has a taste quite different from anything else we have perhaps been used to here in the UK. In fact when I first tried Kalmath Algae I was pregnant with our third child and really wasn't sure.

However I persevered and have used it for three or so years now. All of our children aged 6,4 and 2 have it every day and often have days where they ask for more particularly our youngest who got a taste for it through breast milk! My husband and other family members take it, as do many of my close friends.

How best to take it

It is best to take the algae in the morning, shortly before or with your breakfast, and depending on how much you are taking again midmorning and early afternoon. Our digestive system is at its strongest earlier in the day and so the earlier the better!

For most people it is best to take a cup of herbal tea on waking to warm the body and help our digestive system to wake up. This is wonderful preparation for taking algae. The 2 best ways to take the algae to help your body to use it optimally are either about 20-30 minutes before meals, or as part of a simple meal including fruit, and or vegetables in some form.

For example I give our children their algae by opening a capsule and mixing it with about an egg cup full of water before they tuck into their breakfast. If you find the taste doesn't agree with you you could mix it with a little fruit juice, ideally something like apple juice which is easy to digest, or depending on the rest of your nutritional aims and personal likes and dislikes mixed in with a vegetable or a blended vegetable and fruit juice.

I have taken my algae in many different ways at different times. What feels right to us now often changes over time. A big factor here in the North of England is often the weather and seasons. Sometimes I've taken algae in green vegetable juices, sometimes in fruit based smoothies and sometimes sprinkled on berries or other seasonal fruit together with my porridge!

The key points are to take it before or early in the meal, ideally as part of a simple meal, and with some fruit or vegetables in some form as algae has what's called an enormous

synergy with those types of foods. In other words it is able to work to its best effect in our bodies, being absorbed and assimilated to its maximal potential, and thus it can work even better than if we took it on its own.

It is also very important to avoid taking it with black tea or coffee, and ideally best taken at a different time to eating meat and fish.

A focus on AFA's nutritional Properties

AFA, like wheatgrass is extremely rich in chlorophyll. This is a green pigment found in all forms of plant life, and also in algae, that it is able to transform the sun's energy into a form which nourishes them. The rule of thumb is the greener a fruit or vegetable or plant the more chlorophyll it contains.

Chlorophyll has exceptional healing properties, that have been very well researched. These include:

Building the blood. Chlorophyll is often referred to as 'the blood of plant life'.

Rejuvenating our cells, flooding them with many of the raw materials they need to thrive

Counteracting the side effects of radiation treatment

Removing drug deposits from the body

Counteracting toxins and de-activating many carcinogens, (substances that are known to be involved in the development of cancer)

Supporting our immune system by combating unhealthy colonies of bacteria, yeasts and fungi in the body

Reducing inflammation in our tissues and organs thus helping to heal a number of conditions including sore throats, gum problems, stomach and intestinal inflammation and ulcers, skin inflammations, arthritis, and pancreatitis.

Promoting the growth of a healthy population of bacteria in our digestive tract

Improving and supporting the function of the liver

Activating enzymes, (a group of biological substances integral to the workings of all living things), which to produce vitamins A, E and K

[This list is based on research summarised in Healing with Whole Foods, Asian Traditions and Modern Nutrition written by Paul Pitchford 2002 .]

If you would like to find out more please let me know and I can give you some guidance as to where to look. There are some wonderful books and internet articles which deal with the wonderful properties of chlorophyll in much greater depth.

Interestingly chlorophyll is almost identical to heme, a substance which sits in the middle of each of our haemoglobin molecules, (haemoglobin is the pigment found in red blood cells which allows them to transport oxygen to our cells). Thus all our bodies in fact need to do to use the chlorophyll to build heme is to exchange a magnesium atom for an iron one.

Therefore in summary consuming foods rich in chlorophyll provides us with the perfect building blocks for making our red blood cells, thus helping to ensure maximal amounts of oxygen reach our tissues. This is of fundamental importance when our bodies are under extra strain, and is of particular importance if we are anaemic/ our red blood cell count is on the low side.

Chlorophyll is an excellent source of magnesium, a mineral essential to our bodies to support relaxation and encourage calm. It is of particular importance in helping to lower the blood pressure. Interestingly it is one of the minerals we are most often deficient in here in the West.

In Chinese, and Ayurvedic medicine, (traditional Indian Medicine) Chlorophyll embodies renewal and restoration of strength, and helps to calm excesses in the body. Its green colour helps to open and clear the heart chakra keeping the thoughts and emotions free to flow, (In Chinese Medicine it is the Heart that houses the mind, and the liver that stores the blood thus our state of mind would be supported and balanced by nourishing and building the strength of our blood and heart and liver).

On a final note chlorophyll when extracted in its pure form is the same colour as we see all around us in springtime, the season we by definition associate with rebirth. Many people often feel a sense of rebirth on some or many levels when they start to enjoy chlorophyll in a more concentrated form in their diet for example in Algae or Wheatgrass.

Algae contains a wide array of healthful compounds, most importantly in a form that allows them to be easily absorbed and assimilated.

These include Beta-Carotene, and other Carotenoids, (Carotenoids are powerful antioxidants thus able to support the growth of healthy normal tissue and help to overpower and destroy abnormal cells)

AFA is also a good source of Omega-3 essential fatty acids.

It also contains a substance called PEA which has been widely researched and is known to support mental focus, mental energy, and balance mood.

Further, we know AFA contains a powerful anti-inflammatory compound called Phycocyanin which interestingly gives AFA its blue colour. This assists our bodies to heal and support any internal inflammatory processes.

Algae contains a number of substances which support the body in its excretion of toxins including heavy metals, pesticide residues, and also drug residues.

Further exciting properties of AFA

There is also evidence to support AFA's ability to stimulate the migration of natural killer cells, a type of white blood cell involved in eliminating cancerous and virally infected cells.

The release of stem cells from the bone marrow and the migration of these cells to tissues is the mechanism the human body has developed over thousands of years to heal and regenerate. To date AFA is the only natural compound that has been shown to stimulate stem cell release and migration, thus, in theory AFA could support our bodies in any form of cell regeneration and repair.

The research into this area is in its early stages and very much on going.

I hope you will enjoy the many many benefits of AFA, in fact I'm sure there are many we haven't yet proved scientifically, and perhaps we never will, and perhaps we don't need to because intuitively we know AFA just works!

Further reading

Primordial Food, Aphanizomenon flos-aquae
A Wild Blue-Green Alga with Unique Health Properties by Christian Drapeau, Msc

www.e3live.com (My favourite supplier of AFA algae. They collect it and dry it using very careful methods to preserve it's amazing properties.) It can be purchased from the very friendly and efficient Fresh Network here in the UK on 0845 833 7017

I have practitioner accounts with all the companies below and am happy to supply all the people I work with green foods at cost, typically saving you between 25 and 40% off the retail prices. (Unfortunately I am not able to get a discount off frozen wheatgrass due to the tight margins involved in its commercial production. You can so easily and cheaply grow your own like I dojust contact me for details.

Further Green food information

The Wheatgrass Book by Ann Wigmore

Wheatgrass, Nature's Finest Medicine by Steve Meyerowitz
This book also has some lovely testimonials in

(both available from the Fresh Network)

Fresh Wheatgrass for juicing and frozen cubes of Wheatgrass can be ordered from a lovely company called Acornbury Spouts www.wheatgrass-uk.com 01981 241 336

The Fresh Network can also supply both frozen and dried Wheatgrass

Amazing Green Powders

Dr Schulze's Superfood is a wonderful blend of chlorophyll rich foods including AFA, Wheatgrass and much more.

It was lovingly and very skillfully created for people with terminal and serious chronic conditions.

Further information is available from the UK supplier a wonderful company called Herbs hands Healing. Their website is herbshandshealing.co.uk and the helpline number is 0870 755 4848

or you can visit Dr. Schulzes US website for much more information.

