

# Q&A Ask the experts

Do you need help with your vegan cooking, or do you have a nutritional query? Email your question to [sally.fitzgerald@anthem-publishing.com](mailto:sally.fitzgerald@anthem-publishing.com)

**Q** “I’ve got very sensitive skin and want to try making some of my own vegan skincare and beauty products. Do you have any advice on where to start and what natural ingredients are good to use, and what they’re good for?”



As a naturopath, I first need to mention the importance of taking a holistic approach to caring for your skin. The skin is inextricably linked with the rest of the body and can offer important clues about the status of other body processes, such as digestion and elimination, hormonal balance and overall hydration.

Sensitive skin may present with redness, irritation and dryness. To manage this well it is important to look for any dietary or lifestyle factors that may be causing irritation and remove these as much as possible. Next identify nutrients that may be lacking in your diet, for example on a vegan diet you may need to be a little more vigilant regarding dietary sources of omega 3 essential fats.

The basic skincare routine incorporates cleansing, toning and moisturising. The following ingredients can be used to aid in the management of sensitive skin. (Use organic ingredients where possible.)

INGREDIENT	PROPERTIES
<b>Aloe Vera</b>	Soothing, hydrating, reduces heat and redness (anti-inflammatory).
<b>Calendula</b>	Antimicrobial activity. Promotes healing of broken skin.
<b>Castor oil</b>	Cleansing.
<b>Chamomile</b>	Anti-inflammatory, calming and soothing on the skin.
<b>Coconut oil</b>	Soothes sensitive and irritated skin.
<b>Joboba</b>	Easily absorbed, helps skin maintain moisture.
<b>Lavender</b>	Anti-inflammatory, soothing and calming.
<b>Shea Butter</b>	Moisturising. Protects the skin from drying out.



## 1. Cleansing

Castor oil 30ml (1fl oz) + coconut oil 20ml (3/4fl oz) – apply to face and gently wipe off.

## 2. Toning

2 x chamomile teabags – infuse in distilled water, strain and use, apply with cotton wool. Spritz face throughout the day. (Use within 3 days).

## 3. Moisturising

Joboba oil 20ml (3/4fl oz) + shea butter 5g (1/4oz) + aloe vera gel 5ml (1 tsp) – blend and apply sparingly to damp skin.

Homemade products are best stored in clean containers in the fridge. Do a patch test for new products to ensure there is no irritation.

**Yuwa Aghedo**

**Q** I’ve just heard about Miley Cyrus getting a vegan trademark tattoo. It’s great that she’s getting awareness out there about it, but why is it not on every single vegan product out there? What are the rules for what it gets added to?



You’re right – Miley Cyrus has helped to get the Vegan Trademark into the public eye recently, which is great news. Our sunflower is getting famous!

The Vegan Society has been

registering products as suitable for vegans for decades, and there are currently over 25,000 products that carry the trademark. We wish that we could register every single product – wouldn’t that make shopping as a vegan so much easier?

However, not every vegan product is registered with us. The reason is quite simple – it takes a lot of staff time and work to check whether a product is suitable. Our staff rigorously go through the product’s ingredients list, the manufacturing processes and the processing aids, to ensure that we can register it.

If a product carries our trademark, it doesn’t just mean that it contains no animal products. It also means that it hasn’t been tested on animals, and that there has been no animal use during the manufacture of the product. Our guidelines are so strict because we are passionate about avoiding animal use, and we want to give vegans the confidence they deserve when buying a product that carries the trademark.

That means that if a product does not carry our trademark, we’re unable to confirm whether it is vegan or not. However, if you’re unsure, it’s always a good idea to check in

with the manufacturer. You'll get the most reliable information about the product, while showing them that veganism is important to their customers.

You can always feel free to encourage manufacturers of vegan products to get in touch with us and apply for the trademark. As a customer, they should be interested in your suggestions, and they may well follow this up!

**Elena Orde**

**Q** "I've recently read that we should all make sure we're getting enough iodine in our diets (and that's not just vegans). Why do we need it and where do we get it from?"



Iodine is classed as an essential micronutrient by the British Dietary Association, meaning that we all need to consume a certain amount of this mineral every day in order to maintain the health of our hormonal endocrine system. Iodine plays an important role in the regulation of your thyroid gland, which, believe it or not, is responsible for far more complex bodily functions than controlling weight and appetite!

The thyroid produces and excretes particular hormones that have controlling effects over almost every single cell. The balance of just how much iodine is required in the body is highly sensitive. Too little or

too much iodine can have a drastic impact upon energy levels, and can lead to fatigue, tiredness, problems concentrating, sleep issues and in younger children (and the foetus) could lead to severe impairment in cognition and physical development. So much so that the regular fortification of products with iodine was implemented in the UK and USA until the early 90's.

Today, it is recommended that an average adult consumes 150 mcg, with children and adults requiring 200 mcg per day.

**So where do you get iodine from?**

Well, iodine is a tricky mineral to come by. Most farm-grown vegetables are lacking in iodine these days, due to over-farming of soils and mineral soil leaching – resulting in a lower overall soil concentration during growth, which, sadly, is passed on to us herbivores. However, sea vegetables such as seaweed, kelp and kombu contain extremely high sources of iodine (kombu can contain as much as 7,000 mcg per 5g!). But use caution, regular consumption of these vegetables is not advised as too much iodine is just as unhealthy as getting too little.

One of the best sources of iodine is through a multivitamin (as with vitamin D and B12) – especially if you are prone to tiredness, you're pregnant or you're looking to conceive. Eating sea vegetables once or twice a week will most certainly help, but don't go overboard with your nori rolls, however good they taste!

**Charlotte Willis**

## OUR EXPERTS



**YUWA AGHEDO**

Naturopath Yuwa Aghedo lectures on the Natural Skincare course at CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine). The course enables you to learn

about different skin types and how to balance them through diet, lifestyle and using special herbs. CNM offers training in a range of natural health therapies. Yuwa has 10 years professional experience in the field of natural skincare. Find out more about the CNM and naturopathy at [www.naturopathy-uk.com](http://www.naturopathy-uk.com)



**CHARLOTTE WILLIS**

Charlotte is a student researcher of nutrition and human disease. Studying to become a Doctor of Human Nutrition. She

is particularly interested in wholefood, plant-based nutrition and healthful lifestyle intervention in the prevention and reversal of chronic human diseases, including cancer and cardiac disorders. Charlotte became vegan after discovering its health and fitness benefits and has never looked back. She is a part-time nutritional journalist and writes for The Vegan Society and online publications.



**ELENA ORDE**

Elena is The Vegan Society's Communications and Campaigns Officer and Editor of *The Vegan* magazine. *The Vegan* shares inspiring stories of vegan activists from all over the

world, and keeps members up to date with The Vegan Society's latest projects and campaigns.

Elena regularly contributes vegan news, stories and opinion pieces to mainstream press, and can also be found blogging for The Vegan Society's website.

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

