

The Wellness Express

Jump on the train to good health

Curcumin – A Golden Healer from India

Presented by: Creative Healing

It's revered in one of the world's most ancient health systems as a miracle healer: curcumin – the bright yellow ingredient found in the spice turmeric. In the 5,000 year old system of Indian Ayurvedic medicine, practitioners prescribed curcumin for a host of health problems, believing it could cleanse the body of disease. Other folk medical traditions use curcumin for treating infections and wounds. Now, modern scientific research shows its beneficial properties for treating a variety of diseases. Curcumin is shown to act as an antioxidant, antibiotic and antiviral ingredient.

Curcumin and Cancer

An intriguing fact about Indian health is that the most common cancers found in North America (colon, prostate, breast and lung) are ten times lower in India, where curcumin is widely used in food. Could this be an indication of curcumin's therapeutic effect on cancer? As scientists have conducted more research into this ingredient, it would seem there is a likely connection.

Curcumin may play a role in the regulation of hormones as they relate to cancer. Scientists researching colon cancer discovered that a gastrointestinal hormone called neurotensin accelerates the growth and spread of colon cancer cells.

Experiments with curcumin show that it may inhibit neurotensin and help stop cancer cells from travelling to other parts of the body.

Postmenopausal women who have undergone certain hormone replacement therapies are at greater risk of developing malignant progesterin-accelerated breast tumors. Research conducted by the University of Missouri indicates that curcumin may lower the risk of this cancer for women who have undergone hormone replacement therapy.

Aside from hormones, curcumin also acts on other biological functions to prevent cancer from developing. It's believed curcumin represses a pro-inflammatory protein in the body that is linked to cancer.

And curcumin may actually be able to instruct cancer cells to kill themselves, as scientists uncovered while studying the deadly skin cancer melanoma.

There is one big disadvantage with natural curcumin – it's difficult for your body to fully absorb because gastric juice in your stomach destroys almost all of it.

But scientists are experimenting with placing curcumin in tiny sacs called liposomes, which consist of matter similar in structure to cell membranes.

Exercise of the Week

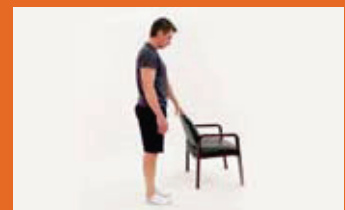
Standing Quadriceps Stretch

Difficulty: Easy

(Consult your chiropractor before doing this or any other exercise.)

Start: Standing beside a chair.

Exercise: Reach for one foot, and hold it behind you. Keeping knees close together bring foot up toward buttocks until you feel a light pull along front of thigh. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Switch sides, and repeat 2X per side.



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7 - 1551 Sutherland Ave. Kelowna, BC V1Y 9M9

P - 250.868.2010 E - info@creativehealing.ca W - www.creativehealing.ca

Researchers discovered this process helps quadruple the absorption rate of curcumin by the body.

Other cancer researchers delivered curcumin in nanoparticles during an in vitro study involving ovarian cancer. This method allowed a better delivery of curcumin to cancerous tumors. It made the tumors less resilient against chemotherapy and radiation so these traditional treatments became more effective in treating this type of cancer.¹

Pure Gold for the Brain

But cancer is not the only disease where curcumin may provide a bounty of health benefits. There's some intriguing research into this ingredient's impact on neurological problems like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

When combined with vitamin D, curcumin slashed the levels of amyloid plaques, harmful substances found in patients suffering from these brain diseases.

Scientists believe curcumin actively stimulates the immune system. Specifically, it increases the ability of scavenger white blood cells known as macrophages to absorb more of the dangerous amyloid plaques.²



Stops Liver Damage

In a study released earlier this year, curcumin helped delay liver damage caused by progressive inflammatory diseases, such as cirrhosis. When affected by these diseases, the liver's bile ducts become inflamed and blocked. The researchers looked at blood and tissue samples from mice with this type of liver problem before and after the study. Mice that were given curcumin had significantly less inflammatory damage to the liver compared to mice that were not given the ingredient.

Safe for Most People

Curcumin seems to have few side effects, although it may cause diarrhea and nausea in dosages higher than 2 grams. It may also interfere with iron absorption in people with certain health conditions. Curcumin may provide maximum health effects as an oil solution rather than in powder form, which seems to be destroyed more quickly by stomach acid.

Quote of the Week

"To be upset over what you don't have is to waste what you do have."

- Ken S. Keyes, Jr



References and Sources:

1. Curcumin induces chemo/radio-sensitization in ovarian cancer cells and curcumin nanoparticles inhibit ovarian cancer cell growth - *Journal of Ovarian Research* 2010, 3:1.
2. PPAR γ Agonist Curcumin Reduces the Amyloid- β -Stimulated Inflammatory Responses in Primary Astrocytes - *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* - Volume 20, Number 4, July 2010.



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Writer/Editor: David Coyne

Writer: Dr. Christian Guenette, DC

Design: Elena Zhukova

Photos: Fred Goldstein

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