

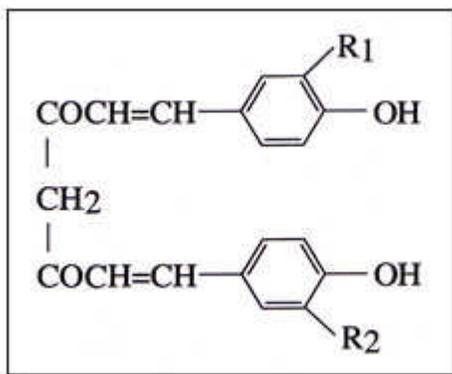
News You Can Use

Curcumin and Cancer Research

More evidence that curcumin may have anti-inflammatory and anticancer activities has renewed scientific interest in its potential to prevent and treat disease. The ability of curcumin to induce apoptosis (cell death) in cultured cancer cells by several different mechanisms has generated scientific interest in the potential for curcumin to prevent some types of cancer. The results of animal studies are promising, particularly with respect to colorectal cancer.



Like many herbal remedies, people first used Curcumin as a food and later discovered that it also had impressive medicinal qualities. Curcumin is a plant compound in turmeric that gives curries its bright yellow color. Over the centuries, this spice has been used as a pain relieving, anti-inflammatory agent to relieve pain and inflammation in the skin and muscles. It has served as a treatment for jaundice, menstrual difficulties, hematuria, hemorrhage, colic, and flatulence. In modern times, research has focused on Curcumin's antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anticarcinogenic, and antimicrobial properties, and on its use in cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal disorders, and as a treatment for the liver.



Research on families emigrating from India to the United States may reflect the importance of Curcumin in the diet. It is well documented that cancer rates in India are lower than those seen in Western countries. However, studies of Indian immigrants in Western societies indicate that rates of cancer and other chronic diseases, such as coronary heart disease and diabetes, increase dramatically after a generation in the adopted country. Change of diet is among the

factors that may be responsible for the changing disease rates. In a study conducted by the United States National Cancer Institute, the researchers noted, "Of particular interest for cancer prevention is the role of turmeric (Curcumin), an ingredient in common Indian curry spice.

The following data is collected from and can be verified on the web site www.curcumin.net. In its entirety it is referenced and footnoted (omitted here for brevity and ease of reading).

Curcumin and Cancer

In experiments on tumors, Curcumin was shown to "directly and irreversibly" affect the growth of new cancers.[2] It appears to suppress the onset of tumors as well as their growth and metastasis.[3] Doctors at the National Institute of Health are excited about the possibilities of using Curcumin to treat cancer. In their words, Curcumin is, "an exciting compound because it can be taken orally and may not have any side effects for cancer patients."

Curcumin and Lung Cancer

Curcumin also appears to reduce the risk of lung cancer associated with smoking. Experiments on Curcumin and nicotine, a powerful cancer-causing chemical, showed that Curcumin reduced the effects of nicotine as a carcinogen by 50%. [4] Curcumin specifically showed significant potential in the reducing

the chances of lung cancer,[5] colon cancer,[6] and as a preventive for cancer in the liver, duodenum, and kidneys.[7] Doctors stress that more research is needed, but the initial results about Curcumin and cancer are very encouraging.

These scientific findings seem to be confirming what millions of Indians already know about the health benefits of curry, Turmeric, and Curcumin.

Curcumin and Prostate Cancer

Curcumin appears to slow or prevent the growth of prostate cancer, the most common cancer in American men. Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in American men, surpassed only by lung cancer in total number of deaths. On average, an American man has about a 30 percent risk of having prostate cancer in his lifetime. As you age, your risk of prostate cancer increases. By age 50, up to one in four men have some cancerous cells in the prostate gland. By age 80, that number has increased to one in two.[8] In a study of prostate cancer cells, Curcumin inhibited cell growth, thus demonstrating a potential for slowing the progression of prostate cancer.[9], [10] Researchers concluded that Curcumin may provide "an alternative, nontoxic" means of treating prostate cancer in men.[11]

Curcumin and Breast Cancer

Curcumin has shown potential as a treatment for breast cancer.[12] Researchers in China

found that Curcumin exerts multiple suppressive effects on human breast carcinoma cells.[13] Other researchers note that the results of studies on Curcumin and breast cancer are mixed and that more research is needed. As always, consult your doctor before adding any herbal supplements to your treatment regimen.

Colorectal cancer and Curcumin

Colorectal cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer deaths in the Western world. More than 56,000 newly diagnosed colorectal cancer patients die each year in the United States. Researchers at the University of California studied the effects of Curcumin on colorectal cancer and found that "Curcumin should be considered as a safe, non-toxic, and easy to use chemotherapeutic agent for colorectal cancers arise in the setting of chromosomal instability as well as microsatellite instability." [14] Treatment with Curcumin has fewer side effects than some other cancer treatment. One researcher wrote, "Naturally occurring COX-2 inhibitors such as Curcumin and certain phytosterols have been proven to be effective as chemopreventive agents against colon carcinogenesis with minimal gastrointestinal toxicity." [15]

Yours in Good Health!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jack and Chris Ritchason
Back to Herbs Team

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