

Turmeric



It is an *overall health tonic* for supporting *improved liver, gallbladder and digestive functions*. Try it for the *relief of aches and pains of sore joints, arthritis and rheumatism*. More importantly, Turmeric is now the subject of many studies that show great promise in the treatment of malignant disease, including prostate, colon and breast cancers.

Information: Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong. Consequently, if they are not tailored to your specific needs, they can do more harm than good. This information is meant to be used by your VHC Medical Team and personal Physician as they build your Total Health Plan. Never attempt to adjust your prescribed medications and/or Natural Treatments without your physician's and Medical Team's knowledge and guidance. Since herbals/nutritionals and medications can interact with each other, it is always advisable to consult with your health care provider and The Vibrant Health Community at www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com (or call 1-866-378-8253) before starting or changing your program.

Botanical: *Curcuma longa*

Family: *Zingiberaceae* (ginger)

Other common names: Curcumin, Curcuma, Haridra, Circuma Rotunda, Gauri, Haldi, Indian Saffron, Indian Yellow Root

History: Turmeric (also known as Curcumin) is an herbaceous perennial that is a native of India and southern and eastern Asia. The herb has been around for at least four thousand years in the folk medicinal literature of India, where it was called *haridra* in the ancient Sanskrit, the classical standard language of India many centuries ago, and the herb figured prominently in the earliest system of Indian medicine, dating back to about 3000 B. C. It was (and is) considered a very important herb in Ayurvedic medicine (in fact, the centerpiece) and was used for its aromatic, stimulant and carminative properties. Turmeric continues to be used in India to treat anorexia, liver disorders, cough, diabetic wounds, rheumatism and sinusitis. There are interesting developments on the horizon regarding the use of natural herbals in the fight against prostate cancer. Rutgers University scientists injected laboratory mice with Turmeric (also called Curcumin) and PEITC (phenethyl isothiocyanate), which is found naturally in cruciferous vegetables (Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, etc.) - after introducing human prostate cancer cells into the animals - either alone or in tandem. They reported that when Turmeric or PEITC was injected separately in new cancerous tumors, the growth of the tumors was retarded, but in well-established tumors, there was little effect.

However, when the combination of Turmeric/Curcumin and PEITC was injected *in combination*, the results produced even stronger effects and significantly reduced tumor growth. The botanical genus, *Curcuma*, and its common names, Curcuma and Curcumin, are derived from the Arabic, *kurkum*, which means "saffron," referring to the herb's deep yellow/orange hue, and aside from its important service to herbal medicine and cuisine, Turmeric is also a rich yellow and orange dye and natural food coloring. It is an important pigment for dyeing silk and wool and provides the intense orange color for the robes of Buddhist monks. Some of the constituents in Turmeric include curcumin (its principal active ingredient), demethoxycurcumin and bisdemethoxycurcumin (which are powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds), a volatile oil, gum, starch, calcium chloride, fiber, caffeic-, cinnamic-, p-coumaric- and other acids, limonene, calcium, iron, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, beta-carotene, B-vitamins and vitamin C.

Beneficial Uses: Turmeric (sometimes called Curcumin) is considered vital therapy for the liver. In ancient Ayurvedic medicine, the herb was a key therapy for good liver health, and in traditional

Chinese medicine, Turmeric is still used regularly to treat liver and gallbladder problems. Today's research claims that this warming herb protects liver cells, and its curcumin content is beneficial for treating liver disease and may reverse liver damage caused by very excessive iron consumption and alcohol. Turmeric is known to increase bile production and boost the production of enzymes that digest sugar and fat and, thereby, may inhibit cholesterol from crystallizing into gallstones.

Because Turmeric boosts the production of enzymes that digest sugar and fat, it is said to cut fat from the blood and may be helpful in weight loss regimens. Indian healers have used Turmeric for thousands of years in Ayurvedic medicine to control weight problems.

For good digestion, Turmeric has a long and venerable history as a warming herb that stimulates the digestive tract. Its mild aromatic properties have been used for thousands of years to stop stomach irritation when not overused. The exact mechanism is not entirely understood, but modern research confirms that the herb does protect gastric mucosa, helping to ease indigestion and other digestive problems. It is known to reduce intestinal gas formation and acts as a fine carminative, helping to expel intestinal gas. This warming herb is also thought to stimulate the appetite and is sometimes used to treat anorexia.

Turmeric is a potent non-steroidal anti-inflammatory that has been very beneficial in the treatment of rheumatism and arthritis. Again, the curcumin content in Turmeric apparently deactivates immune cells that may cause inflammation, without harming other parts of the immune system that are essential in fighting infection. It is said to curtail inflammation of both osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis and reduces swelling in recent bruises, wounds and insect bites. Moreover, it is considered helpful for easing muscle pains and sports injuries, fibromyalgia, tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome and bursitis.

For supporting healthy heart function and better circulation, Turmeric is said to improve blood vessel health and stimulate the entire circulatory system. The curcumin content is considered a vasodilator that helps to relax blood vessels, which helps to regulate blood pressure, thereby possibly lessening a risk of heart attack. It is also thought to reduce tissue damage during an attack. Additionally, Turmeric appears to lower serum cholesterol in the blood and to diminish platelet aggregation (blood clumping), which also helps to combat arteriosclerosis.

As a warming stimulant, Turmeric enhances the respiratory system and is often used to relieve head colds, sinusitis and coughs, and ease chest congestion.

Turmeric has helped ease the discomforts of women's monthly menstruation and regulate its flow. It has also been called a uterine stimulant and has been thought to be helpful in treating uterine problems.

Turmeric is said to stimulate the immune system, and recent research claims that it appears to effectively fight free radicals. An active ingredient in Turmeric seems to be a potent anti-mutagenic and antioxidant that scavenges and combats damage-causing free radicals and epoxides. It seems to activate and enhance the activity of the gene p53, which may reduce the risk of serious colorectal and breast disease. Estrogen interacts with an anti-malignancy gene known as gene p53, which is a "molecular patrolman" that ensures that genetically defective cells do not multiply. In addition, the herb's cell-protective properties behave in the same way as the nutrient antioxidant vitamins C and E, which are also thought to inhibit free-radical reactions. Turmeric is said to work well in conjunction with, and aid recovery after, chemotherapy drug and radiation treatments. Recent studies completed at Johns Hopkins have indicated that compounds in Turmeric (Curcumin) may, in fact, help prevent colon cancer, and we have provided the direct link to bring you up to date on this recent science.

Turmeric, as the major ingredient in curry, has been used quite liberally in the Indian diet, and recent research studies have suggested that the herb has the ability to reduce the effects of Alzheimer's disease. India has one of the lowest Alzheimer's disease rates in the world, estimated at one percent of individuals over sixty-five; whereas, ten percent of Americans over sixty-five develop Alzheimer's disease.

As an overall cleansing herb, Turmeric is thought to accelerate the detoxification process in the whole body. It is an *antiviral* and fights viral infection. There is some indication that Turmeric may help to inhibit HIV infection from progressing to full-blown AIDS by acting as a protease inhibitor. It is considered an *antibacterial* and has been known to kill parasites, fight skin infection (acne) and improve the texture and smoothness of the skin. The herb is also said to possess *antifungal* properties, inhibiting yeast overgrowth. Finally, the herb appears to be an effective tonic that normalizes energy flow, enhances the immune system and improves overall good health.

Pursuant to Turmeric's actions as an antibacterial, recent information has emerged that Turmeric's potent antibiotic qualities may be helpful in combatting MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), a particularly dangerous bacterium that may not respond to conventional pharmaceutical treatments.

Contraindications: Those taking blood thinners (Coumadin, etc.) should avoid Turmeric, as it may add to their anti-clotting effects. Extended use is not recommended, as it may result in stomach distress. Normal therapeutic doses of Turmeric protect from ulcers, but at very high doses, it may induce ulcers. Turmeric is not recommended for persons with biliary tract obstruction, as the curcumin stimulates bile secretion. People with congestive

heart failure, whose cause remains unidentified, should avoid this herb. Turmeric is not recommended for people with painful gallstones, obstructive jaundice, acute bilious colic or extremely toxic liver disorder. This is why it is very important to take only the recommended dose of this herbal remedy. Since Turmeric is considered a uterine stimulant, pregnant women should not use it. Turmeric is said to work best when taken on an empty stomach.

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