

Herbs For Healing Newsletter

Herb of the Month: Turmeric the 'Spice of Life'



Turmeric is the spice that gives curries that bright yellow colour. Turmeric root does not grow in our climate but many people have the dried and ground spice in their kitchen cupboard.

This flavoursome curry ingredient containing curcumin also has medicinal properties. It has been used as food and as medicine for centuries. *Curcuma longa* is the botanical name for turmeric.

Modern research has shown that curcumin in turmeric has antibiotic, antiviral, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits. Its anti-inflammatory properties are useful for people who suffer from inflamed joints caused by osteo arthritis or rheumatoid arthritis.

Turmeric: a health inducing spice and natural remedy

Turmeric is an all round beneficial and health inducing spice and natural remedy.

Its curative properties are general and far-reaching, therefore it has many possible applications.

It can target specific illnesses when ingested in medicinal quantities, and it can also, when used as a supplement, contribute to general wellbeing and work as a powerful preventative.

..To prevent is better than to cure!

"It is not known why turmeric is such an effective anti-inflammatory agent, but one common theory holds that curcumin causes a protein

called NFkB, or Nuclear Factor-Kappa B, to remain dormant. NFkB determines which genes are turned on or off and when; it also increases the production of inflammatory proteins, which often attack the joints.

By suppressing this protein, curcumin thus reduces incidences of inflammation".

(www.turmericinfo.com/curcumin_anti-inflammatory.html)



Can it help prevent **Alzheimer's**?

Curcumin appears to prevent the spread of amyloid protein plaques which are thought to lead to dementia and Alzheimer's. In animal studies it was found that curcumin dissolves these plaques and prevents the formation of new plaques.

Dr Susanne Sorensen of the Alzheimer Society said: "Indian communities that regularly eat curcumin have a surprisingly low incidence of Alzheimer's disease but we don't yet know why".

In fact elderly villagers in India, who eat turmeric in their daily curries, have the world's lowest rate of Alzheimer's disease.

Other important **turmeric** benefits

Turmeric has also been shown to inhibit Helicobacter pylori, a bacterium known to be responsible for stomach ulcers and some stomach cancers.

The liver benefits from eating turmeric, it has a detoxifying effect and it may be of help in keeping the liver healthy during chemotherapy cancer treatment.

Animal studies from the university of Texas also indicate that curcumin inhibits the growth of skin cancer, melanoma, and slows the spread of breast cancer into the lungs.

Tests in laboratory dishes even showed that curcumin made melanoma skin cancer cells more likely to self-destruct in a process known as apoptosis.



Make a turmeric tea or infusion

Turmeric root does not grow in our climate but many people have the dried and ground spice in their kitchen cupboard.

Aside from using turmeric in delicious curries and

dahls, here is a turmeric tea recipe.

Do experiment with added flavourings until you find a combination that's to your taste:

Recipe

Bring 4 mugs of water to a boil.

Add 1 teaspoon of ground turmeric and simmer gently for 10 minutes.

Strain the tea through a fine sieve into a mug, add honey and/or lemon to taste. You can also add a teaspoon of ginger along with the turmeric.

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