

## Turmeric: Close to a Panacea?

by Gurubandhu.

When most people think of turmeric, they think of curry powder, which is actually a masala, or a mixture of spices. Turmeric is the spice that turns it yellow. However, most people probably think mustard powder is what gives yellow mustard its amber hue. Actually, it is the turmeric added to the mustard that colors the condiment.

Throughout the ages, turmeric has had many medicinal uses. It is one of the most powerful antioxidants known in herbology, primarily because it contains a phyto-chemical known as curcumin.

One common use is for the skin. In India, when someone gets cut they turn first to turmeric. It is reputed to help clean and heal the wound because of its anti-bacterial properties. It also helps with eczema and acne. One can make a paste and leave it on awhile and then rinse off.

Turmeric also helps heal the “inside skin,” the mucus membranes. This includes digestive or eliminative problems. [Dr Sharon McKenna](#) and her team found that curcumin started to kill cancer cells in the esophagus within 24 hours of its use. Other clinical studies have shown that turmeric aids in reducing other types of tumors. The lungs are noted for their mucus membranes

and people have been helped with turmeric easing lung congestion. The sinuses will benefit also. Add some salt and a pinch of turmeric to some water. Tilt your head, and gently pour the water in one nostril, letting it drain out the opposite nostril. Do the same to the other side and continue twice more on each side to open up the higher passages.

The yellow herb has shown much promise in chronic diseases. Arthritis strikes many people. Since turmeric is in the ginger family, it is anti-inflammatory. People take it internally and make a poultice to put on aching joints.

There is no single panacea. However, turmeric is about as close to a panacea as any supplement can get. My teacher always told

us to add turmeric to water in a ratio of 12 parts water to 1 part turmeric. Cook this for 8 minutes until it makes a paste, then store the paste in a refrigerator. Recent studies from UCLA have shown that when just giving the powder to Alzheimer’s patients, none of the curcumin was digested. The researchers found it worked best when heated in oil. Indian people start out most meal-making by sauteing a masala of turmeric, onions, garlic and ginger in oil. Try it and you will enjoy the taste and good health.



*Turmeric is reputed to help clean and heal wounds because of its anti-bacterial properties.*