

TURMERIC (CURCUMA LONGA): FROM ANCIENT MEDICINE TO CURRENT POTENTIAL THERAPEUTIC AGENT AS CURCUMIN

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Turmeric is one of the prominent herbal medicines. Its use as a therapeutic agent, spice and colourant is known since the Vedic period. Biologically active constituent of turmeric is curcumin. Due to astonishing antioxidant and antiinflammatory properties of curcumin, it has become an attractive target for the development of novel drugs for the treatment of many challenging diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, dementia, diabetes, arthritis, etc. During the recent years curative properties of curcumin have been explored extensively all over the world, and many clinical trials are in progress for deeper understanding of mechanism of its therapeutic action. Safety, non-toxicity, and high tolerability are the unique pharmaceutically significant features of curcumin. Recently, various methods have been developed to enhance the water solubility and bioavailability of curcumin which are based on the use of metal ions, and biocompatible organic substances.
