

HOW TO MAXIMISE TURMERIC



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How to boost your body's ability to absorb curcumin

For thousands of years many cultures around the world have been aware of the health benefits of turmeric. There have been multiple studies in the last decade researching the scientific basis of this ancient knowledge. Turmeric and in particular curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric, is studied to uncover its health benefits and possible pharmaceutical use. These studies have proven that curcumin not only works, but that it is safe, targeting diseased or deteriorated cells in the body whilst leaving healthy cells protected and unharmed. However, a continuing concern is that curcumin has limited bioavailability. This is the ease in which a nutrient can be absorbed and used by the body.

So how can we help our bodies to optimise the absorption of curcumin and maximise the

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One of the main reasons curcumin has limited bioavailability is that it has low solubility in water. However, curcuminoids are lipophilic (they attach to fats) so we can help curcumin along by mixing it with good quality, healthy fats. The curcumin will bind to fat and is then more easily absorbed by our gut. Cooking with fats such as coconut oil, or mixing a golden latte or smoothie with full fat dairy, almond or coconut milk will optimise the body's absorption of curcumin.

If you are taking a turmeric supplement it is best to take them with meals or choose a supplement which contains a bioavailability enhancer. The beneficial effects of turmeric are traditionally achieved through dietary consumption, even at low levels, over long periods of time.

Mix with black pepper

Most of the curcumin ingested gets metabolised before it can be absorbed. This is due to the activity of the digestive enzymes in the stomach, intestines and liver. Piperine, a compound of black pepper, has been shown to make curcumin more bioavailable. Piperine is a potent inhibitor of drug metabolism and works by protecting curcumin from the digestive enzymes that are actively trying to remove it from the bloodstream. It therefore boosts the absorption of curcumin, and has no adverse side effects. One study concluded that piperine increases the bioavailability of curcumin by 2000%. Therefore, cooking with turmeric, freshly ground black pepper and oils together is a great combination to boost your absorption of curcumin.

Use the whole turmeric root

Turmeric is more than just curcumin. There are over 100 compounds in the turmeric root which have been found to have potent pharmacological properties. When the root is processed many of these compounds are lost, and some supplements contain only extracted chemical curcumin. Traditional medicine has always used the whole turmeric root and research is suggesting that the various compounds work synergistically together and can aid in the absorption of curcumin. Certain combinations of curcuminoids produce more biological action than any curcuminoid used alone. Many practitioners recommend using the whole turmeric root for cooking as well as supplementation for health purposes. This reflects the belief that whole plants are usually better than isolates. So another way to boost your absorption of curcumin is to eat turmeric in its natural form, the way Mother Nature intended.

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But how high the heat and for how long depends on the spice. Turmeric is moderately sensitive to heat, so there is no need to boil it for a long period of time. Short cooking times (under 15 minutes) do not destroy turmeric, but will in fact increase the bioavailability of curcumin. So heating turmeric in a golden latte or adding it to your cooking, such as in curry or scrambled eggs, will maximise its absorption by the body.

These four simple steps are easily done at home and incorporated into your favourite recipes. In this easy and delicious way you can boost your body's ability to absorb curcumin, maximise its bioavailability, and enjoy all the benefits of this amazing super spice.

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We recommend our Turmeric Blends to help you get the best benefits from taking turmeric.

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