

Are there health benefits to taking turmeric?

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Can an ancient yellow root spice be good for you? A recent study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* shows curcumin, an active ingredient in turmeric, effectively kills certain cancer cells. While research continues on the role turmeric plays in

treating cancer, there may be other health benefits to ingesting the spice.

You may have it in your spice rack or enjoy it in South Asian meals. Turmeric is derived from a plant similar to ginger and has long been used for medicinal purposes.

"Turmeric has natural anti-inflammatory compounds called curcuminoids, and these curcuminoids have been associated with a positive effect on various diseases," says Anya Guy, a Mayo Clinic dietitian. Those diseases include Type 2 diabetes, obesity, [inflammatory bowel disease](#) and cancer.

"Although curcumin or turmeric has [anti-inflammatory properties](#), if you are diagnosed with a condition such as cancer or diabetes, speak to your [health care provider](#) before taking the supplement," says Guy.

Turmeric can be ingested in powder form or in mixes such as curry or chutney. "I recommend choosing more of the powder or natural forms and also try to eat it with a meal to increase its absorption," says Guy.

How much is safe to take each day you may ask? "Turmeric is considered to be safe at doses up to 8 grams per day," says Guy.

More information: Sourav Banerjee et al. Ancient drug curcumin impedes 26S proteasome activity by direct inhibition of dual-specificity tyrosine-regulated kinase 2, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (2018). [DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1806797115](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1806797115)

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