

A GOLDEN GEM FOR BRAIN HEALTH

We are constantly stressed with deadlines and pressured to produce tasks faster and with more efficiency. In today's workforce, our mental clarity plays a major role in delivering quality work. Practices to help think more clearly may include better sleep, controlled anxiety, and brain supplements. One such "brain supplement" with research bragging rights is curcumin, the active ingredient found in turmeric. Known for its antioxidant properties and support of healthy inflammatory pathways, this powerful herb can also improve cognition and mood. One particular group that has seen a significant impact is the elderly population.



According to the Journal of Pharmacology, curcumin contains many constituents which can support biological mechanisms that counteract age-related cognitive decline, dementia, or mood disorders. One randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial examined the acute (1 and 3 hours after a single dose), chronic (4 weeks), and acute-on-chronic (1 and 3 hours after the single dose following chronic treatment) effects of a curcumin formulation on cognitive function, mood, and blood biomarkers in 60 healthy adults aged 60-85. After one hour of administration, curcumin had significantly improved performance on attention and working memory tasks, compared with the placebo. Working memory and mood, which included general fatigue, change in calmness, contentedness and fatigue provoked by psychological stress were significantly improved after chronic treatment.

Curcumin boosts BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), the brain hormone that helps increase the growth of new neurons to improve memory and learning---and provides a significant way to fight an aging brain. In addition, this powerful ingredient increases blood flow to the brain, and provides better focus for increased work productivity.

Enjoying its anxiolytic effects is also a benefit of taking curcumin. *According to the Journal of Clinical Psychopharmacology*, a randomized double-blinded and placebo-controlled trial with 60 subjects experiencing stress-related anxiety and fatigue were to receive standard curcumin, and placebo for 30 days. The results indicated a better quality of life, and reduced stress and fatigue for those receiving standard curcumin. This revolutionary substance helps to alleviate depression by changing the release of serotonin and dopamine---two powerful neurotransmitters that help keep the mind at ease. Curcumin also supports inflammation pathways in the brain, which helps improve mood, energy, and production levels.

Curcumin can also support cognition through its potent antioxidant activity that enhances the bioavailability of DHA---the powerful omega-3 fatty acid shown to foster brain health. A study from *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* showed curcumin does indeed protect the brain from neurodegeneration. The experiment involved 40 subjects ages 51-84. They were randomized and consumed 90mg of curcumin twice daily or placebo for 18 months. The results indicated improved long-term

retrieval, visual memory, and attention. With amazing medicinal properties, curcumin can also improve neuroplasticity, which enables the brain to transform and strengthen versus decline with aging.

Curcumin may also promote anti-seizure activity. With its antioxidant properties, this ingredient slows down reactive astrocyte expression, which helps cells survive in the brain. According to the [Neuropharmacology Laboratory, Department of Pharmacology](#), the antioxidant properties of curcumin helped alleviate seizures, cognitive impairment, and oxidative stress in rats. An oral pretreatment of curcumin was given to male rats who were injected with Pentylentetrazole (PZT) every other day. The study showed that curcumin improved the seizure score and decreased the number of myoclonic jerks. Furthermore, the results signify that curcumin restructures seizures, oxidative stress, and brain function. In addition, it helped protect memory function that may also be compromised by seizure activity.

With its ability to bolster fatty acids in the brain, curcumin helps neurons flourish to enhance critical thinking, improve problem solving, and make better decisions. The neuroprotective properties in curcumin also help to regenerate brain stem cells. In fact, according to [Stem Cell Research and Therapy](#), a study was conducted involving the effects of curcumin on endogenous neural stem cells. The research showed that curcumin played a key role in the recovery of brain cells by combating the activation of microglia cells. Experimenters from the [Institute of Neuroscience and Medicine](#) in Julich, Germany, studied the effects of neural stem cell production. During a 72-hour period, the experiment indicated that Turmeric improved cell production by 80%. This demonstrates how effective curcumin can be for powerful brain function.

This unique nutrient helps boost mental clarity, enhance cognition, improve concentration, and provides anxiolytic benefits. Whether it's more work production, or a better mood, curcumin is a hidden golden gem for brain health.

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