

## Is Curcumin (Turmeric) A Natural Treatment For Glaucoma?

### What Is Curcumin?

Curcumin (chemical name: diferuloylmethane) is an extract of Turmeric, a common spice used throughout India and Asia<sup>[1]</sup>

### Evidence that Curcumin can be used to treat glaucoma:

Of the supplements I recommend for my patients with glaucoma, this one has the least evidence supporting its use. Although it has been shown to have a neuroprotective<sup>[2]</sup> effect, it has not specifically been shown to either reduce IOP or slow the progression of glaucoma. In other words, because glaucoma is a disease of the optic *nerve*, and Curcumin has been shown to protect nerves from damage, it is thought that Curcumin may also benefit those with glaucoma.

### Curcumin's Potential Side Effects and Risks:

The FDA reports that Curcumin is “generally recognized as safe”. The most commonly reported side effect is stomach upset. There is, however, laboratory evidence that Curcumin could be toxic to the liver when large doses are used over a long period of<sup>[3,4]</sup>. Such toxicity has *not* been shown to occur in humans taking Curcumin by mouth. Indeed, there is even evidence that Curcumin could protect the liver from damage.<sup>[5]</sup>In general there is very little evidence that oral supplementation with Curcumin could result in serious side effects even in doses as high as 12,000mg/day.<sup>[6]</sup> Minor side effects may include “GI distress” (stomach upset) when taken in the capsule form. If this is the case it can often be alleviated by simply opening the capsule and pouring the Curcumin powder over soft food (such as soup or mashed potatoes).

### Recommended Dosage:

As there are no published studies that have evaluated the effect of Curcumin on IOP or glaucoma progression, it is not possible to recommend a glaucoma-specific dose. In the studies that have evaluated the effect of Curcumin on other diseases the dosages ranged from 20mg to 12,000mg/day.<sup>[7,8]</sup>As many of these studies evaluated the effect of doses around 500-1,000mg/day this is most likely a reasonable range to consider and is what I generally recommend to my patients with glaucoma who are interested in adding oral supplements to their treatment.

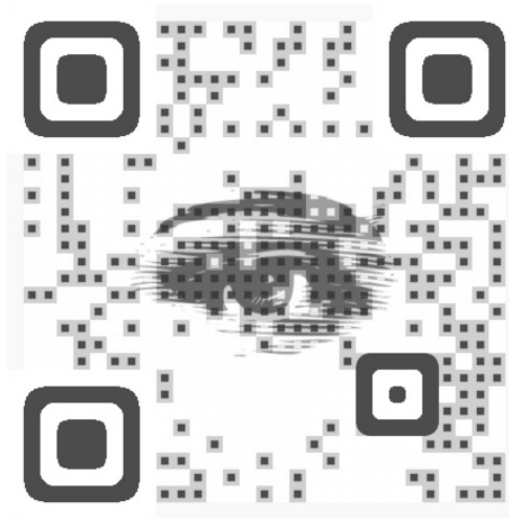
### Cost of Curcumin:

If you are interested in taking Curcumin (Turmeric) as a natural treatment for glaucoma, you can find it at most health food stores as well as [online](#) for as little as \$0.17 per 500mg capsule. Take note, however, that the quality can vary greatly. To be certain you are getting a high quality product I would recommend you only purchase supplements such

as Curcumin as from a trusted brand such as [Life Extension](#)

## References:

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