

Curcumin (*Turmeric*)

Curcumin improves depression, anxiety, and memory. It is one of the best-studied natural treatments for depression, with benefits that equal antidepressants. It works especially well in people with depression and diabetes, obesity, arthritic pain, cognitive problems, postpartum depression, or older age (older than 45).

Curcumin is derived from the turmeric spice, found in curry and mustard. It reduces inflammation, protects brain cells, and prevents dementia by reducing amyloid plaques in the brain.

Medical benefits include arthritis, weight loss, COVID, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, fatty liver disease, ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, menopausal hot flashes, premenstrual syndrome, indigestion, dry eyes, and prevention of cancer and dementia.

Dosing

Start at 500 mg a day for one week then raise to 1,000 mg. The maximum dose is 1,500 mg daily. It can be taken all at once or divided twice a day. Mood benefits kick in after 1-2 months and cognitive benefits take longer, up to 6 months.

Side effects

Curcumin is well tolerated but can cause stomach upset, nausea, dizziness, or diarrhea. Stop curcumin before surgery as it can increase bleed-time. Curcumin may have estrogen-like effects, posing risks to hormone-sensitive condition such as breast cancer, uterine cancer, ovarian cancer, endometriosis, or uterine fibroids. Avoid if you are prone to oxalate renal stones.



Curcumin is associated with rare cases of liver damage, but there is also research showing it improves liver health.

Quick links to recommended products

www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements

How to purchase

Look for products labeled “BCM-95” or “95% curcuminoids” and choose one tested for safety by an independent lab. I have listed those on the next page and there are links to products at:

www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements

Curcumin is poorly absorbed. To get around this, you’ll need to take it with a large fatty meal, use a high bioavailability product, or a product with bioperine (a black pepper extract that improves absorption). Bioperine is cheap but can cause drug interactions. High bioavailability products are free of that but add to the cost.

—Chris Aiken, MD, updated 7/28/2025

Curcumin on Amazon

The products below all have the right ingredients. They are listed in order of price on Amazon.com. The daily dose is the number of capsules based on 1,000mg/day (labels change, so double check the label to make sure you get at least 1,000mg/day). See chrisaikenmd.com/supplements for product links.

Brand	mg	# Caps	Price	Daily Dose	Daily Price	ASIN (use to look up on Amazon)
Doctor's Best C3 & BioPerine [♻]	1000	120	\$46.54	1	\$0.38	B001J9K5PG
Kirkland Signature Turmeric with Black Pepper	500	329	\$41.00	2	0.26	B0DMH7CHST
Puritan's Pride without Bioperine	500	180	\$8.12	2	0.09	B004R68S2K
Jarrow Formulas [♻]	500	120	\$20.00	2	\$0.33	B0013OVSUS
Vitacost C3 & Bioperine [♻]	1160	120	\$34.00	2	\$0.56	B00465O9XO
Now Curcumin [♻]	665	60	\$14.99	2	\$0.49	B0013OXD3I
Nutrigold & BioPerine [♻]	500	120	\$28.49	2	\$0.46	B0055713UO
LifeExtension Super Bio [♻]	400	60	\$20.50	2.5 [†]	\$0.85	B00WAL288O
A1 Vitality with NovaSOL	500	60	\$24.00	2	\$0.80	B018GQJQHM
Natures Plus PRO Longvida	500	60	\$30.00	2	\$1.00	B0C6V41QJ5
Progressive Labs Curcumin [♻]	400	60	\$26.08	2.5 [†]	\$1.09	B004HWP2AU

[♻] Approved by consumerlab.com for purity and accuracy in labeling. The following brands were *not* approved: Advanced Physician Formulas, Eclectic Institute, Jamieson.

[†] If the daily dose is 2.5, take 2 every other day and 3 every other day; if it is 1.5 take 1 every other day and 2 every other day.

