

## Herbs for Skin Care: Turmeric

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa* L.) is one of the oldest cultivated crops which has been grown in India for several thousand years. Turmeric, the main spice powder in the Indian cuisine, is considered by many to be the most powerful herb on the planet at fighting and potentially reversing disease. It is one of the multiuse products having many valuable properties and uses.

India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world. India dominates the world production scenario contributing 78% followed by China (8%), Myanmar (4%) and Nigeria and Bangladesh together contributing to 6% of the global production. India is virtually a monopoly supplier to the world with a share of about 76 per cent of the total global output

### Composition and Nutritional value of Turmeric

Principle	Nutrient Value	Percentage of RDA
Energy	354 Kcal	17%
Carbohydrates	64.9 g	50%
Protein	7.83 g	14%
Total Fat	9.88 g	33%
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Dietary Fiber	21 g	52.5%
Vitamins		
Folates	39 µg	10%
Niacin	5.140 mg	32%
Pyridoxine	1.80 mg	138%
Riboflavin	0.233 mg	18%
Vitamin A	0 IU	0%
Vitamin C	25.9 mg	43%
Vitamin E	3.10 mg	21%
Vitamin K	13.4 µg	11%
Electrolytes		
Sodium	38 mg	2.5%
Potassium	2525 mg	54%
Minerals		
Calcium	183 mg	18%
Copper	603 µg	67%
Iron	41.42 mg	517%
Magnesium	193 mg	48%
Manganese	7.83 mg	340%
Phosphorus	268 mg	38%
Zinc	4.35 mg	39.5%

*Source: USDA National Nutrient Database*

## Health benefits of Turmeric

Turmeric gets its health benefits primarily because of curcumin, a bioactive component. Curcumin has anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and antioxidant properties.

Turmeric has healing properties. Besides flavoring food, use to purify the blood and skin conditions remedy is probably the most common use of Turmeric in Ayurveda. The main organs that turmeric treats are the skin, heart, liver and lungs. Turmeric is used for epilepsy and bleeding disorders, skin diseases, to purify the body-mind, and to help the lungs expel Kapha. In Ayurvedic cooking, turmeric is everywhere, this multifaceted wonder turmeric powder helps to detoxify the liver, balance cholesterol levels, fight allergies, stimulate digestion, boost immunity, enhance the complexion.

It is a natural antiseptic and antibacterial agent, useful in disinfecting cuts and burns. When combined with cauliflower, it has shown to prevent prostate cancer and stop the growth of existing prostate cancer. It may prevent melanoma and cause existing melanoma cells to die. Turmeric reduces the risk of childhood leukemia and is a natural liver detoxifier. It may prevent metastases from occurring in many different forms of cancer. Turmeric can prevent and slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease by removing amyloid plaque buildup in the brain. It is a potent natural anti-inflammatory that works as well as many anti-inflammatory drugs but without the side effects and hence it is a natural treatment for arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Turmeric is a natural painkiller and aids in fat metabolism and helps in weight management. Turmeric speeds up wound healing and assist in remodeling of damaged skin and it may help in the treatment of psoriasis and other inflammatory skin conditions.

Turmeric helps to regulate the female reproductive system and purifies the uterus and breast milk. Turmeric reduces fevers, diarrhea, urinary disorders, insanity, poisoning, cough, and lactation problems in general. Turmeric is used to treat external ulcers that respond to nothing else. Turmeric decreases Kapha and so is used to remove mucus in the throat, watery discharges like leucorrhea, and any pus in the eyes, ears, or in wounds, etc. It is also an antioxidant Ayurveda recognizes turmeric as a heating powder, contributing bitter, pungent and astringent tastes.

**Activities of Turmeric include:** Alterative, analgesic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antitumor, anti-allergic, antioxidant, antiseptic, antispasmodic, appetizer, astringent, cardiovascular, carminative, cholagogue, digestive, diuretic, stimulant, and vulnerary.

**Therapeutic uses of Turmeric include** treatment of Anemia, cancer, diabetes, digestion, food poisoning, gallstones, indigestion, IBS, parasites, poor circulation, staph infections, and wounds.

Curcuma longa, due to its anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties that can help to:

- heal wounds
- prevent breakouts (and lessen active ones)
- fight eczema and psoriasis
- reduce acne scarring
- brighten dark circles
- bring out your natural glow

### **Contribute to a natural glowing Skin**

Antioxidants and anti-inflammatory components provide glow and luster to the skin. Turmeric may also revive your skin by bringing out its natural glow.

### **Can heal wounds**

The curcumin found in turmeric can help wounds heal by decreasing inflammation and oxidation. It also lowers the response of your body to cutaneous wounds. This results in your wounds healing more quickly. Studies have found that turmeric can positively affect tissue and collagen as well.

#### **Help in acne scarring**

A contributing cause of acne is bacteria known as *Propionibacterium acnes*, the most abundant bacteria on human skin. To treat severe acne, antibiotics such as erythromycin and clindamycin in combination with azelaic acid are prescribed. However, as drug resistance grows, researchers continually test new antimicrobial agents. Curcumin has antibacterial activity against a number of bacteria including *P. acnes* when combined with lauric acid. The curcumin in turmeric may decrease inflammation, research suggests that curcumin can help in the management of oxidative and inflammatory conditions.” Turmeric face mask help reduce acne and any resulting scars. The anti-inflammatory qualities can target your pores and calm the skin. Turmeric is also known to reduce scarring. This combination of uses may help your face clear up from acne breakouts.

#### **Can help skin issues**

The antioxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities of turmeric may help your psoriasis by controlling flares and other symptoms. Can help with eczema, alopecia, lichen planus, and other skin issues.

#### **Turmeric to combat sun damage and signs of aging**

UV rays are skin’s worst enemy as they cause sunburns, skin cancer, fine lines, hyperpigmentation, and wrinkles. A recent study found that turmeric’s antioxidant compounds significantly improved sun damage in rat skin, a possible early indication for the potential to slow the effects of aging in humans. Antioxidants prevent free radicals like pollution and UV rays from affecting your skin’s elasticity — the quality that keeps your skin feeling soft and supple.