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In a recent study of 100 osteoarthritis patients, a new form of curcumin was found to be effective at reducing joint pain, increasing mobility and improving overall quality of life.

A NEW CURCUMIN-PHOSPHATIDYLCHOLINE COMPLEX, IS A SAFE AND EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS PATIENTS

Curcumin is the yellow pigment of turmeric (*Curcuma longa* L.), and is a very common spice in Indian cuisine and a major ingredient of curry powders. Turmeric has a long history of medicinal use, primarily in treating inflammation. Many of its traditional uses have been validated scientifically. Curcumin is one of the most thoroughly researched botanicals with almost 3,000 studies found throughout the biomedical literature.

Previous research of a new bioavailable form of curcumin has shown it to be effective in decreasing joint pain and improving joint function, but the research was short-term and involved only 50 patients. The long-term safety and efficacy was recently investigated in an 8 month study that involved 100 osteoarthritis patients.

The clinical end points in the study included Western Ontario and McMaster Universities [WOMAC] score, Karnofsky Performance Scale Index, and treadmill walking performance. In addition, blood samples were taken at baseline and at the end of the trial to evaluate a series of inflammatory markers.

In this trial, positive results were obtained for all end-points evaluated. Pain sensation, joint stiffness, and physical function improved significantly, as indicated by more than a 50% decrease in WOMAC scores. A significant improvement of mobility was also observed. The treadmill test showed an overall three-fold increase in walking distance compared to the control group. These clinical outcomes were supported by interesting findings in the biochemical evaluation of inflammatory status and oxidative stress in patients in the treatment group. Blood samples at baseline and after completion of the trial demonstrated a statistically significant reduction of C-reactive protein (CRP) levels in the subgroup with elevated CRP treated with Meriva.

The results of the current study show that this curcumin-phosphatidylcholine complex may be an effective and safe compound for the complementary management of osteoarthritis.

Gianni Belcaro et al. Efficacy and Safety of Meriva®, a Curcumin-phosphatidylcholine Complex, during Extended Administration in Osteoarthritis Patients Altern Med Rev 2010;15(4):337-344.