

Curcumin as cheerful as Prozac

New evidence spices up depression

Sep. 23, 2013 [Shara Rutberg](#) | Functional Ingredients

New research pits Prozac against curcumin in battling major depressive disorder.



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Pharma versus food in an all out battle for happiness. That was the aim of a new study performed at the Pharmacology Department of the Government Medical College situated in the city of Bhavnagar in the Indian province of Gujarat. Well, not really, but you get the idea.

The study, published in [Phytotherapy Research](#) and noted on [bornrich.com](#), compared the safety and efficiency of curcumin, the main compound in the spice turmeric, to Prozac, the main compound in the sanity of millions of Americans, in battling major depression.

Sixty patients received either 20 mg of Prozac or 1000 mg of curcumin in the randomized six week study. Some got a combo. Researchers used the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale to measure the power of each potion. (This is a series of 17 questions, not an actual scale machine that weighs how "heavy" your mood is, although that would be cool.)

The results? A draw - though curcumin lacks the side effects sometimes served up with Prozac, so some would say the curry spice comes out ahead. The subjects who got curcumin with a side of Prozac showed the most improvement of all.

"This study provides first clinical evidence that curcumin may be used as an effective and safe modality for treatment in patients with MDD (major depressive disorder) without concurrent suicidal ideation or other psychotic disorders," according to the article's abstract.

Research on the benefits of curcumin are heating up like a well-seasoned dish of Panang curry. [A study published earlier this summer suggests that the curcumin-packed dishes may boost the pulmonary functions in the elderly.](#)