

## Curcumin Protects Against Colorectal Cancer

With March being national colorectal cancer awareness month I'd like to share a few tips aimed at prevention. Colorectal cancer is most common in western countries and is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of adult cancer in the U.S. and Canada. To the contrary, it is very rare in India. There are probably several factors that account for the high rate in western countries such as above average total caloric and animal fat intake, smoking, and insufficient fiber, vegetables and fruit.

**Curcumin** (Tumeric, *Curcuma longa*) is widely used in India as both a seasoning for food and as a botanical medicine. Curcumin's anti-oxidant properties protect against DNA damage. It also has strong anti-inflammatory properties. Inflammation and low antioxidant status are both linked to cancer. Curcumin has been shown to inhibit the various stages of cancer development. In fact, authors of an article published in *Cancer Research* September 2008 conclude that curcumin may be useful for treating colon cancer. Along with a whole foods, plant based diet, optimum vitamin D and calcium status, and appropriately scheduled screening exams, curcumin seems to be important and logical addition for colorectal cancer prevention.

