

Herbal Tablet to Cure Vaginal Infection

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Herbal tablet that contains curcumin can cure vaginal candidiasis without any side effects, claim scientists at the JSS University, Mysore, Karnataka, in their recent study.

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Curcumin is a natural compound found in Turmeric that is known in traditional medicine for its anti-inflammatory, antiviral, anti-carcinogenic, anti-mutagenic, anti-coagulant, antibacterial, anti-psoriatic, neuroprotective, and antifungal properties. Previous studies have shown that it inhibits the growth of the fungus *Candida albicans* that is the most common cause of vaginal candidiasis.

Vaginal candidiasis is a common fungal infection of the vagina and up to 75% of women suffer from at least one episode of *Candida albicans* in their lifetime. Many antifungal drugs are available to treat vaginal candidiasis but they show side effects. Hence, natural or herbal drug formulations could bring relief to many women who suffer from this fungal ailment.

Researchers at the JSS University, Mysore, Karnataka, have made herbal tablets from three natural polymers, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose that is a semisynthetic polymer derived from plant cellulose, xantham gum, and guar gum to encapsulate the drug curcumin to treat vaginal candidiasis. The Curcumin tablets inhibit fungal cultures, are nontoxic, show enhanced bioadhesion for up to 24 hours to vaginal mucosa when tested in sheep mucosal extracts and hence, can be used to provide slow and sustained drug release inhibiting fungal infection. The scientists proudly claim, "An herbal approach of using curcumin as an antifungal agent to treat vaginal candidiasis by formulating curcumin in a bioadhesive monolithic tablet was successful". The tablet is more than 98% pure for drug curcumin, is about 3mm thick, 12mm wide and weighs 500mg and therefore, easy to insert in the vagina as shown by studies in female rabbits.

The tablet has shown promising results in animal studies but has still not been tested in humans. Clinical studies are required to demonstrate its efficacy and ease of application in the population.

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