
Protective effect of curcumin against injury induced stress in albino rats.

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Abstract

Curcumin is a phytopolyphenol pigment isolated from the plant *Curcuma longa*, commonly known as turmeric, with a variety of pharmacologic properties. Curcumin blocks the formation of reactive oxygen species, possesses anti-inflammatory properties as a result of inhibition of cyclooxygenases (COX) and other enzymes involved in inflammation. These effects may play a role on the agent's having antineoplastic properties, which include inhibition of tumor cell proliferation and suppression of chemically induced carcinogenesis and tumor growth in animal models of cancer. This study was designed to clarify the effect of curcumin on induced stressing male albino rats. For this purpose about 100 male albino rats weighing 110-130 gm were divided into four groups; the first group considered as a healthy matched group (control) and the 2nd group exposed to intraperitoneal puncture (sham stress). While the 3rd group administered orally with curcumin powder in a dose of (80 mg/kg body weight). The 4th group exposed to Sham stress and administered with curcumin in the same previous dose.

Three different samples were taken; liver and kidney tissue were taken for measuring of malondialdehyde (MDA), Superoxide dismutase (SOD) and reduced glutathione (GSH). Blood samples were taken, where the plasma was used for estimation of Total protein, Albumin, Urea and Creatinine. The whole blood was taken for erythrocytic count (RBCs), total leukocyte count (WBCs), packed cell volume (PCV) and hemoglobin. Results revealed that sham stress (2nd group) show significant increase in mean values of MDA, SOD and a significant decrease in the mean value of GSH, WBCs count, PCV and hemoglobin concentration.

The obtained results revealed non significant changes in total protein, albumin, creatinine and urea. However, the results revealed that administration of curcumin significantly alleviated or these changes caused due to stress and returned these changes near to the normal values. Sham stress was taken as a model of severe stress which the body can be exposed to. These results suggest that curcumin may play an important role in alleviating the changes caused by exposure to stress.

Key words: Curcumin; Antioxidants; Stress.

Introduction

In the US, turmeric is generally recognized as safe (GRAS) as a food by the FDA. Serious adverse effects have not been reported in humans taking 1 g of curcumin. Curcumin supplementation up to 8 g/day for 3 months was well-tolerated in patients with precancerous conditions or noninvasive cancer (*et al.*, 2001). Each injury is accompanied with the oxidation stress with an increase in the level of free oxygen radicals and decrease in the body's antioxidant capacity (*Motycka et al.*, 2006). Reactive oxygen species (ROS) may be generated after physical exercise in working muscles, and in the tissues that undergo reperfusion (*Sjödin et al.*, 1990; *Ji*, 1995). It is estimated that 2-5% of the total flux leaks to form primary short-lived ROS such as superoxide radical anion and hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂), and hydroxyl radical (OH[•]) (*Boveris and Chan*, 1990). Sources of ROS during exercise include enhanced purine oxidation, damage to membrane lipids, and oxidation of iron-containing proteins, disruption of Ca²⁺ homeostasis (*Jackson*, 2000), and flow-induced endothelium ROS production (*Shi et al.*, 2001). Neutrophils infiltrating the muscle after injury by exercise may also produce ROS (*Jones et al.*, 1986), which contribute to oxidative tissue damage (*Sen*, 1995), e.g., DNA injury (*Inoue et al.*, 1991), lipid peroxidation (*Meydani et al.*, 1993) and protein oxidation (*Saxton et al.*, 1993). These processes are associated with the appearance of an increase in the severity of several chronic diseases (*Ames et al.*, 1993; *Gutteridge*, 1993). If the production of free radicals is excessive as observed during strenuous aerobic exercise (*Ji*, 1995) and antioxidant defense mechanisms are impaired, the balance between pro-oxidants and antioxidants will be lost. Increased MDA levels and decreased GSH levels in the stressed group were reversed to control values after antioxidant treatment (*et al.*, 2007). In the same aspect, *Ohta et al.*, (2007) reported that increases in lipid peroxidation), NO_x (nitrite/nitrate) concentrations and myeloperoxidase activity and decreases in ascorbic acid, reduced glutathione concentrations and superoxide dismutase activity.

Findings of *Yu et al.*, (2006) revealed that chronic oral treatment with galactosides and glucosides in a polysaccharide extract elevates enzymatic activity of SOD and GPx (glutathione peroxidase) accompanied by a corresponding decrease in malondialdehyde level. The antioxidant activities of these compounds during exercise-induced oxidative stress are correlated with various activities: reducing the production of superoxide and hydroxyl radicals, inhibiting lipid peroxidation, enhancing antioxidative defenses, and increasing the production of glutathione peroxidase activity and expression in different tissues. *Sahin et al.* (2007) found that the level of SOD, GSH and MDA in both kidney and liver were affected by stress. There is an apparent paradox between the benefits of moderate and strenuous aerobic exercise or exposure to bad atmospheric conditions such as torture. For these reasons the intraperitoneal injuries (Sham) are considered as severe physiological stressors to which animals are exposed. The study was to investigate if curcumin which is a phytopolyphenol pigment from the plant *Curcuma longa*, can ameliorate or alleviate the changes due to stress.

Materials and methods

1- Animals and design:

This study was carried out on 80 male albino Wistar strain rats. Their body ranged from 110-130 g and their ages ranged from 60-70 days. All animals were kept in their plastic cages for two weeks for acclimatization in suitable well ventilated cages. They were maintained under controlled temperature ($23^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$) and light cycle (lights on, 0700–1900 h) with ad libitum access to water and standard laboratory chow that was purchased from the B.M. Company for International Commercial Development in Egypt. These animals were divided into 4 groups each one consisted of 20 male albino rats. The 1st one considered as control group (G1) was not receiving anything except the used ration for 3 successive weeks and from the 4th week onwards received corn oil (250 μl / kg body weight) which is the vehicle of the drug used on the other day by using stomach tube till the 11th weeks of experimental period. The 2nd group called sham stressed group (G2) subjected to false intraperitoneal injection of saline from the third week till the 10th week and at the 11th week false intraperitoneal injection stopped for the recovery. The 3rd group called curcumin group (G3) in which all animals received curcumin only in an oral dose of 80 mg/kg body weight (*Kalpa Menon, 2004*) dissolved in (250ml/ kg body weight) corn oil which is the vehicle of curcumin from the third week until the end of the experiment. The animals of the 4th group (G4) were subjected to false intraperitoneal injection and the curcumin administered in the same previously mentioned dose from the 3rd week till the end of the experiment. These experiments were performed in duplicate. All procedures were performed in accordance with the Menoufia University Guide for the Care and Use of Experimental Animals. All rats included in this study were certified as healthy and exhibited normal grooming and feeding behavior on the day of studies.

2. Ration ingredients:

The ration was purchased from the B.M. Company for International Commercial Development in Egypt.

3. Sampling:

From the fifth week of starting experiment, 5 rats were killed by decapitation from each group every two weeks. The liver and the kidneys were taken and dissected and homogenized with buffer (phosphate buffer pH 7.4) and stored at -20°C until the determination of antioxidant enzymes and malondialdehyde (MDA). From the fifth week of starting experiment, 10 rats were taken every two weeks from each group. Blood samples were taken from the orbital sinus puncture; one in heparinized tubes for hematological examinations and the 2nd left to clot and serum was aspirated and collected at -20°C until used for biochemical studies.

4. Biochemical and hematological analysis:

The biochemical parameters as malondialdehyde (MDA) was measured according to the method described by Yashkochi and Masters (1979), while Superoxide dismutase (SOD) was measured according to the method of Giannopolitis and Dávila (1977) and reduced glutathione (GSH) as showed by Patton and Chanarin (1977).

liver and kidney tissues. The tissue homogenate was prepared according method described by Combs et al., (1987).

Total protein, albumin and creatinine were estimated calorimetrically as desc Young (2001) using kits obtained from Elctroscent Company. Serum Ur measured according to the method described by the Patton and Chanarin (198 kits from Diamond diagnostic company. The RBCs, and total leukocytes were as the method described by the Feldman et al., (2000). Packed cell volume (P hemoglobin were measured as described by Feldman et al., (2000).

5. Statistical analysis:

Data were expressed as means + SEM (Standard error mean) and resu considered statistically significant at $P \leq 0.05$. All data were subjected to an variance (ANOVA) test according to Snedecor and Cochran (1980).

Results

1. Effect of curcumin on malondialdehyde (MDA) level.

Our results revealed a significant ($P \leq 0.05$) increase in Malondialdehyde (both liver and kidney tissue in the 2nd group (sham stress group) compared 1 control group as shown in both figure 1A and figure 2A, respectively. Ad curcumin to the stressed group (4th group) significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) amelior increase of MDA and returned its values to normal in both liver and kidney. T of curcumin on this change due to induced stress was very clear and promine all the time of experiment (at the 5th, 7th, 9th and the 11th week) in case of kic liver.

2. Effect of curcumin on superoxide dismutase (SOD) activity.

A significant ($P \leq 0.05$) increase in superoxide dismutase (SOD) in both kidney tissue in the 2nd group (sham stress group) compared to the 1st contro figure 1B and figure 2B, respectively). Adding the curcumin to the stressed g group) significantly ameliorated the increase of SOD and returned its value: normal in both liver and kidney. The effect of curcumin on the induced stress clear and prominent during all the time of experiment (at the 5th, 7th, 9th and week) in both liver and kidney (figures 1B and 2B).

3. Effect of curcumin on reduced Glutathione (GSH) level.

MDA level and SOD activity increased significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) in both kidney due to the induced stress in the 2nd group, while the values of GSH d significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) in both liver and kidney at 5th, 7th, 9th and 11th week (fi and 2C, respectively). The effect of curcumin on this change due to induced s very clear and prominent during all the time of experiment (at the 5th, 7th, 9th 11th week) in both kidney and liver (figure 1C and 2C).

4. Effect of curcumin on total protein, albumin, creatinine and urea levels

A non significant changes due to sham stress (2nd group) or due to curc group) on total protein, albumin, creatinine and urea was observed (3A, 3E 3D, respectively).

5. Effect of curcumin on some hematological parameters

Sham stress (2nd group) significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) decreased the value leukocytic count, packed cell volume (PCV) and hemoglobin content through experiment as shown in figures 4B, 4C and 4D, respectively. Oral administration of curcumin to the stressed group (4th group) significantly ($P < 0.05$) alleviated changes caused due to stress and returned these changes to normal values (B, C and D).

Discussion

In our experiment, we used a group of rats administered orally with and without induction stress (3rd group) to confirm that all the significant changes in the 2nd group were due to stress induced by intraperitoneal puncture and not by any other cause.

Malondialdehyde (MDA) is the most abundant product of lipid peroxidation (Chaudhary et al., 1994). The statistical analysis in the present study shows that there was a significant increase in the level of (MDA) in liver and kidney tissues in the 2nd group as shown in figure 1A and figure 2A due to exposure of the animal to stress. This increase in the level of malondialdehyde is due to the ability of stress to generate ROS which leads to oxidative damage in several tissues by increased peroxidation. This result is in agreement with Halliwell and Gutteridge (1999). Curcumin is a potent anti-oxidant and was shown to protect experimental animals against lipid peroxidation (Sreejayan and Rao, 1997; Dinkova-Kostova and Talalay, 1998). In the present study, curcumin significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) decreased the mean level of MDA in the liver and kidney tissues in sham stressed rats (the 4th group). These results come in accordance with the results of Reddy and Lokesh (1994); Reddy et al. (2000) and Reyes-Gordillo et al., (2007). This decrease of MDA is explained by enhancing the activities of antioxidant enzymes (Reddy and Lokesh, 1994; Mohanty et al., 2004), and inhibiting the generation of ROS (Somasudha et al., 2002).

In the same manner, Soudamini et al., (1992); Unnikrishnan and Rao (1994); Sreejayan and Rao (1994) attributed the antioxidant mechanism of curcumin to the neutralizing effect of free radicals and decreasing the O_2 and made it less available for oxidation and also may have attributed the potent inhibitory effect of curcumin to the inhibition of lipo-oxygenase and cyclo-oxygenase in arachidonic acid during the metabolism of arachidonic acids (Huang et al., 1997) on the opposite side of Reyes-Gordillo et al., (2007) attributed the antioxidant effect of curcumin to inhibiting NF- κ B (tumor necrosis factor- α) activation and thus production of proinflammatory cytokines.

Superoxide dismutase (SOD) acts on superoxide radical and converts it to hydrogen peroxide radical. SOD activity produces H_2O_2 which is a toxic oxidant. It is formed by performing a reactive hydroxyl radical with iron and hydrochloric acid (HOC) (Lunec, 1990). Statistically, there was a significant ($P \leq 0.05$) increase in SOD activity in both liver and kidney tissues in the sham stress group (2nd group) when compared with the control group (1st group) (Figures 1B and 2B, respectively). This increase is

returned to its normal activity after oral administration of curcumin to stressed (4th group). These results may be due to an increase in lipid peroxidation consequently increase free radicals production. These results were in accordance that showed by Goel et al., (2005). They attributed this increase to the oxidative stress which leads to an increase in SOD activity to compensate this stress.

Reduced glutathione (GSH) is a pool for three important metabolic pathways enters as cofactor for glutathione-S-transferase (GST) during the process of detoxification. and it is considered as a substrate for the γ -glutamyl transferase. as it plays an important role as free radical scavenger like antioxidant enzyme (Meister, 1994; Anderson, 1997). In the present study, the statistical analysis revealed that sham stress significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) decreased the level of reduced glutathione (GSH) in both liver and kidney tissues in comparison to the control group (figure 1 and 2C, respectively). After oral administration of curcumin to the sham stressed 4th group, we found that curcumin overcame the effect of stress caused by intraperitoneal puncture. These results may be due to lowering peroxidation and maintaining the activities of antioxidant enzymes at higher levels. Our data are in accordance with that exhibited by Reddy and Lokesh, (1994) or by increasing the level of glutathione to prevent the decrease that takes place during the process of a stress (Jaruga et al., 1998; Yu et al., 2006).

In this study, there was a significant ($P \leq 0.05$) decrease in total leukocyte count and hemoglobin concentration in sham stress group (2nd group) when compared to control group (1st group) (figures 4B, 4C and 4D, respectively). After oral administration of curcumin to the sham stressed rats in 4th group, the results revealed that curcumin overcame the effect of stress caused by intraperitoneal puncture. These results are in agreement with Littarru et al., (1994); Tesoriere et al., (2001); Jaja et al., (2005) results maybe attributed to the oxidative stress caused by intraperitoneal puncture. We can conclude that, curcumin, appears to play important roles as antioxidant, anti-inflammatory agent and has non toxic or harmful effects when added to the food in a recommended dose and therefore we recommend adding of curcumin to the diet of animals or peoples those exposed to different conditions of stress. Curcumin ameliorates and alleviates the changes caused due to stress. Further research is required to elucidate the exact actions of curcumin and any further role that it may have.

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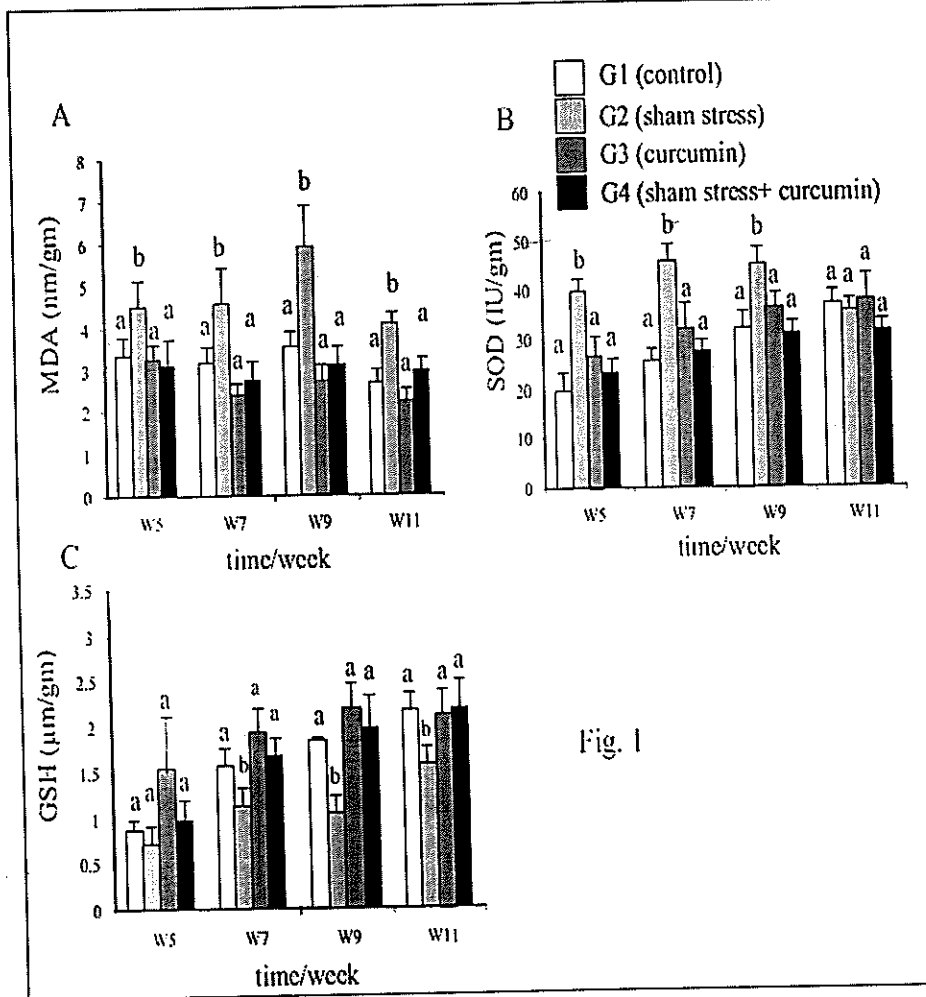


Fig. 1

Figure 1. Effect of curcumin on the level of MDA, SOD and GSH in rat liver. G1 (1st group or control group), G2 (2nd group or sham stress group) group that received oral administration of curcumin in a dose of 80 mg weight from the 3rd week till the end of the experiment), G4 (4th group the rats subjected to false intraperitoneal puncture and the curcumin administered orally with the same dose mentioned in the 3rd group). and vertical line represents the mean \pm SEM ($n = 5$). Bars with different from control group (G1) are significantly different; $P \leq 0.05$.

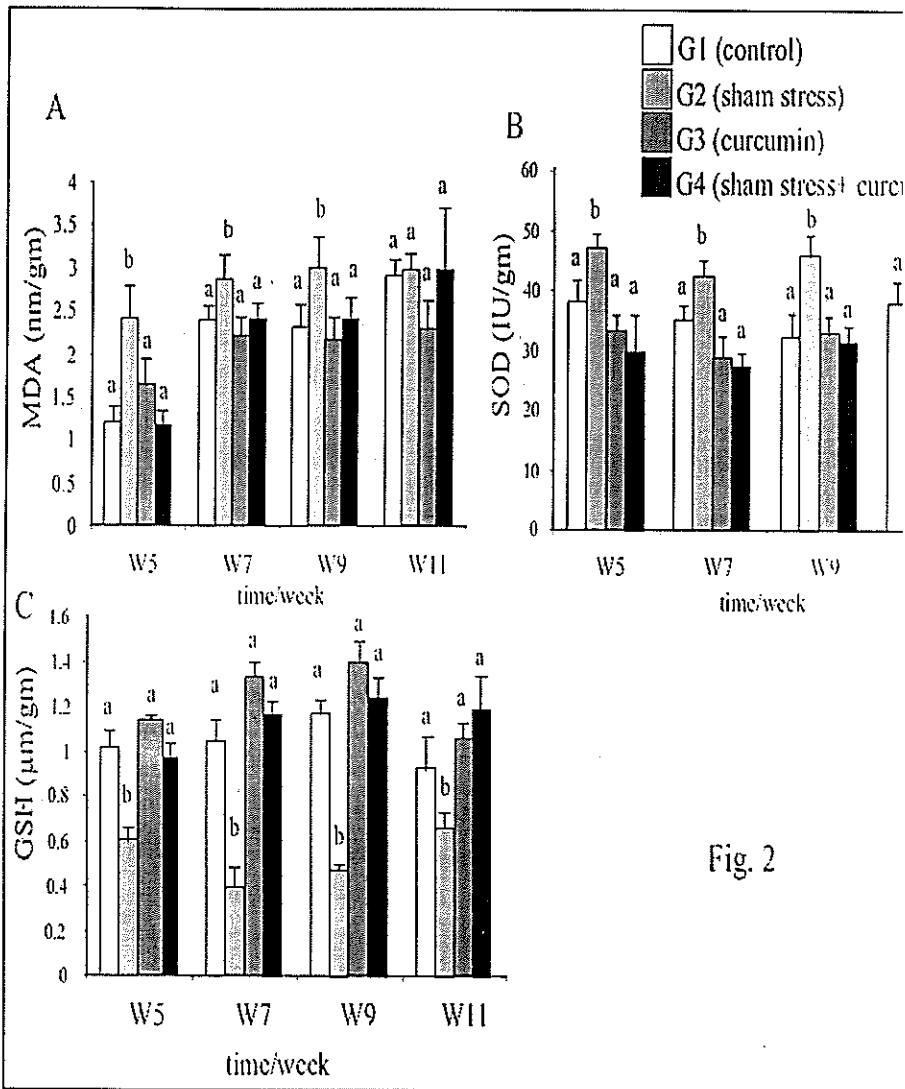


Fig. 2

Figure 2. Effect of curcumin on the level of MDA, SOD and GSH in rat tissue. G1 (1st group or control group), G2 (2nd group or sham stress group), G3 (3rd group that received oral administration of curcumin in a dose of 80 mg/kg body weight from the 3rd week till the end of the experiment), G4 (4th group or sham stress + curcumin group) which the rats subjected to false intraperitoneal puncture and the curcumin administered orally with the same dose mentioned in the 3rd group). Error bars and vertical line represents the mean \pm SEM ($n = 5$). Bars with different letters are significantly different; $P \leq 0.05$.

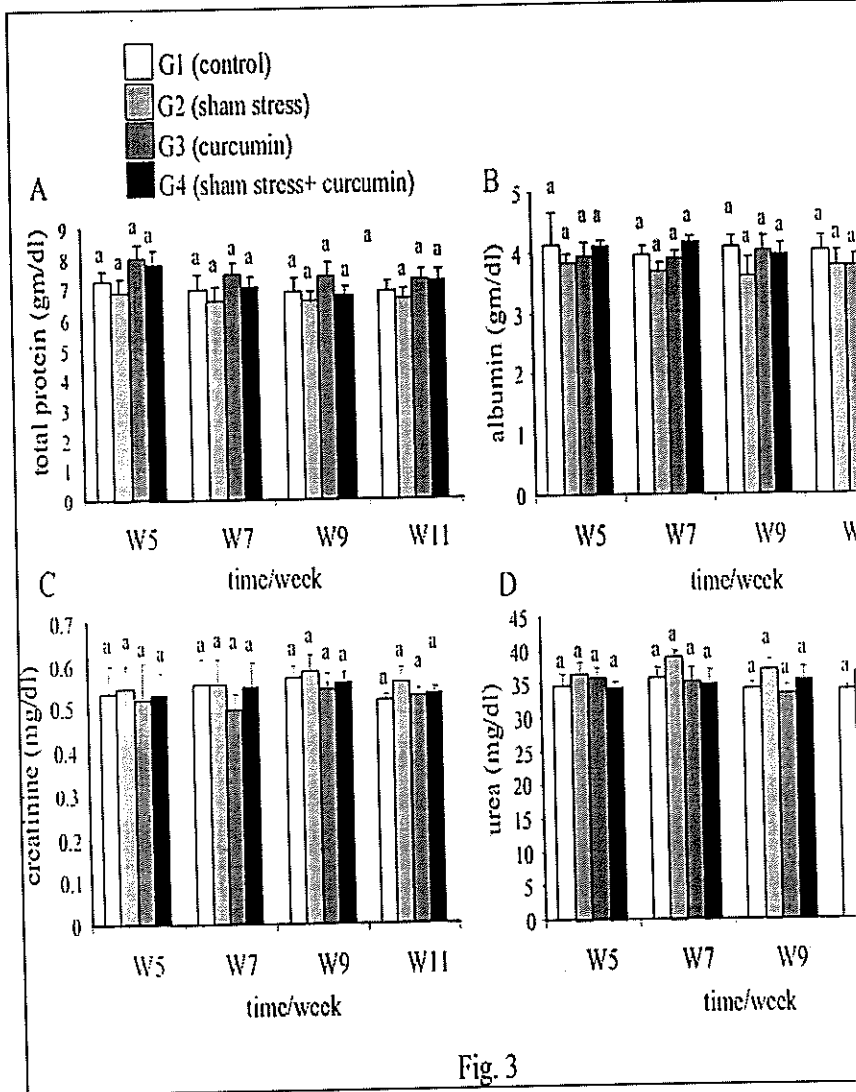


Figure 3. Effect of curcumin on the level of total protein, albumin, creatinine and urea in rat sera. G1 (1st group or control group), G2 (2nd group or sham stress group), G3 (3rd group that received oral administration of curcumin in a dose of 80 mg/kg body weight from the 3rd week till the end of the experiment) and G4 (4th group in which the rats subjected to false intraperitoneal puncture and curcumin was administered orally with the same dose mentioned in G3 group). Each bar and vertical line represents the mean \pm SEM ($n = 5$). Different letters from control group (G1) are significantly different; $P \leq 0.05$.

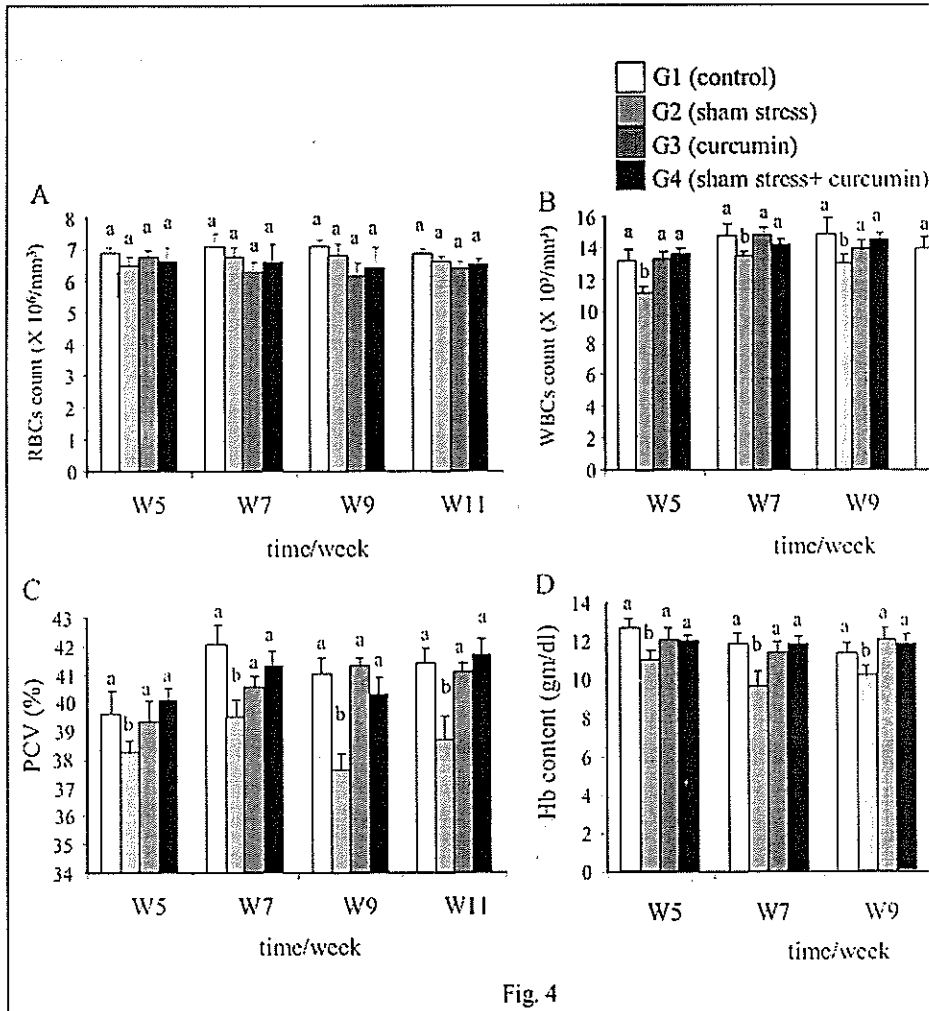


Fig. 4

Figure 4. Effect of curcumin on RBCs count, total leukocyte count (leukocyte count), packed cell volume (PCV) and hemoglobin concentration in rat. group or control group), G2 (2nd group or sham stress group), G3 (3rd group received oral administration of curcumin in a dose of 80 mg/kg body weight the 3rd week till the end of the experiment), G4 (4th group in which the rat was subjected to false intraperitoneal puncture and the curcumin was administered orally with the same dose mentioned in the 3rd group). Each bar and vertical error bar represents the mean \pm SEM ($n = 5$). Bars with different letter from control (G1) are significantly different; $P \leq 0.05$.

الوقائية للكوركومين ضد الاجهاد المستحث فى فئران الالبينو.

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اء الحيوية وكيمياء التغذية-كلية الطب البيطرى- جامعة المنوفيه بالسادات ** قسم الفسيولوجيا- كلية الطب
عة بها. ***قسم الطب الشرعى والسوم-كلية الطب-جامعة المنيا.

تبرينات الكركومين من النباتات التى تمتلك خصائص دوائيه كثيرة .حيث يمنع تاثير انزيم
سجينيز ولذلك فله خاصيه كمضاد للالتهاب. كما اثبتت الابحاث العلميه المختلفه ان
تأثيرات مضادة لنمو الخلايا السرطانية.وقد اجريت هذه الدراسه لدراسة بعض التأثيرات
ركومين فى الفئران المعرضة للاجهاد المستحث صناعيا . ولمعرفة هذه التأثيرات تم
أر من النوع الالبينو يتراوح وزنها من ١١٠-١٣٠ جرام .قسمت الى اربع مجموعات
ة اشتملت على ٢٠ فأر .الاولى (G1) وهى المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة الثانية ((G2)
ن هذه المجموعة للوخذ البريتونى(Sham stress). وتم تجريع المجموعة الثالثة (G3)
ن عن طريق الفم (٨٠ ملجرام/كجم) من وزن الحيوان. والمجموعة الرابعة(G4) تم
لاجهاد وكذلك تم تجريعها الكوركومين بالجرعة السابقة. بعد ذلك تم تجميع عينات بعد
اسبوع بالترتيب من الكبد والكلى لقياس مستوى المألوندديهيد والجلوتاثيون المختزل
ط انزيم السوبراوكسيد ديسميوتيز. كما تم تجميع عينات الدم وتم فصل البلازما لقياس
ى والاليومين واليوريا والكرياتينين.ايضا تم عد كل من كرات الدم الحمراء والبيضاء
ات المضغوطة والهيموجلوبين. وقد اوضحت النتائج ان هناك زيادة معنوية فى كل من
وندالديهيد ونشاط السوبراوكسيد ديسميوتيز ونقص معنوى فى مستوى كل من الجلوتاثيون
كرات الدم الحمراء وحجم الكريات المضغوطة والهيموجلوبين. كما اوضحت ايضا عدم
فى مستوى البروتين الكلى والاليومين والكرياتينين. ومن هذه النتائج يتضح لنا ان اضافة
ادى الى علاج الاثار السلبية الناشئة من الاجهاد عن طريق الوخذ البريتونى.