



July 7, 2016 – Grand Rapids, MI

Curcumin: Question 2

Unintended consequences—that's one of the basic tenets of science. We introduce a change, whether a diet, a nutrient, or even a specific type of exercise and we get results we didn't expect. If they're positive, great. But what if they're not?

Here's one for you. A good friend loved to eat carrots, and she ate a lot of raw carrots as part of her meals and snacks. Carrots have carotenoids, which have a characteristic orange color. She ate so many carrots that the palms of her hands turned orange. Definitely an unintended consequence.

Having your hands turn orange is probably benign, but what if increasing a nutrient inhibits the absorption of another nutrient? That's why research on the effects of a nutrient on cells or tissues can be problematic. What happens in a test tube or petri dish may not be possible in the body. What if taking a large amount of curcumin in a supplement negatively impacts the absorption of another phytonutrient or a medication? Or increases the absorption of another phytonutrient or a medication? Could be good or maybe not.



We can't possibly know nor anticipate every possibility but we should think things through to examine whether there are potential unintended consequences. One more question on Saturday.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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