

Antidiabetic and Metabolic Effects of Turmeric (*Curcuma Longa*) in Patients with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus or Hyperglycemia - A Systematic Meta-Review and Meta-Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Background: Curcumin, the primary bioactive compound in turmeric (*Curcuma longa* Linn.), has demonstrated potential benefits in managing type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and hyperglycemia. This systematic meta-review aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of turmeric in improving glycemic control, lipid profiles, and other metabolic markers in the patients with T2DM or hyperglycemia.

Methods: A comprehensive literature search was conducted across seven electronic databases to identify relevant studies published up to December 2023. Inclusion criteria focused on randomized controlled trials included in systematic reviews or meta-analyses assessing curcumin's effects on metabolic markers. Data were extracted systematically, and the methodological quality of included reviews was assessed using AMSTAR-2. Meta-analyses were performed using STATA 17 to synthesize outcomes for fasting blood glucose (FBG), glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c), lipid profiles, and other markers, employing random-effects models to account for heterogeneity.

Results: Thirteen systematic reviews and meta-analyses of 63 unique randomized controlled trials involving 3706 human participants met the inclusion criteria. The pooled analysis revealed that curcumin significantly reduced FBG (mean difference [MD] = -6.30 mg/dL; 95% CI: -9.33, -3.27), HbA1c (MD = -0.31%; 95% CI: -0.57, -0.05), low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (MD = -5.95 mg/dL; 95% CI: -9.43, -2.47), and triglycerides (TG) (MD = -12.88 mg/dL; 95% CI: -20.09, -5.67) while increasing high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (MD = 1.46 mg/dL; 95% CI: 0.37, 2.56). No significant effects were observed on total cholesterol, blood pressure, body mass index, blood urea nitrogen, or creatinine levels. Heterogeneity across studies was high but consistent with meta-analytical expectations for diverse populations and interventions.

Conclusions: Curcumin supplementation shows statistically significant improvements in glycemic control and lipid profiles in individuals with T2DM or hyperglycemia, supporting its potential as an adjunct therapy. However, its effects on renal markers, blood pressure, and body weight remain inconclusive. Moreover the efficacy of the crude powder of turmeric remain unexplored. Future trials should address long-term efficacy and safety to optimize the therapeutic role of curcumin and turmeric powder in diabetes management.

Keywords: Antidiabetic potential; curcumin; diabetes; glycemic control; turmeric; type 2 diabetes mellitus.

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes is a chronic metabolic disease caused by either deficient insulin production (type 1 diabetes mellitus [T1DM]) or inefficient insulin utilization (type

2 diabetes mellitus [T2DM]).¹ Owing to the increased consumption of junk food, sedentary lifestyles, and physical inactivity, the incidence and prevalence of diabetes have been rapidly increasing and T2DM has become a global public health concern.^{2,3} According

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to a report published by the International Diabetes Federation in 2023, over 537 million adults worldwide were affected by diabetes, with T2DM accounting for the vast majority of cases.⁴ T2DM is characterized by elevated blood glucose levels (hyperglycemia), resulting from insulin resistance, pancreatic β -cell dysfunction, or a combination of both.^{1,2} If left unmanaged, T2DM can lead to complications multiple organ systems, retinopathy, neuropathy, etc.^{3,5} These long-term complications reduce quality of life and substantially increase healthcare costs.^{6,7}

Despite the availability of pharmacological interventions for managing T2DM, their long-term efficacy is often limited by their side effects,^{8,9} and many patients fail to achieve optimal glycemic control.⁵ This has increased interest in alternative and complementary therapies, particularly those derived from natural ingredients with fewer side effects.^{10,11} Curcumin, a major bioactive component of *Curcuma longa* (turmeric), has been studied extensively worldwide for its potential antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties.^{12,13} Preclinical and clinical studies suggest that curcumin may help manage T2DM by improving glucose metabolism, increasing insulin sensitivity, and protecting β -cells from oxidative stress.¹⁴⁻¹⁷

While several systematic reviews and meta-analyses (SRMAs) have been conducted on the antidiabetic effects of curcumin in patients with T2DM,¹⁸⁻²⁴ findings have been inconsistent. Some SRMAs reported significant improvements in glycemic control, whereas others reported minimal or inconsistent effects.²⁵⁻²⁸ A meta-review, which involves reviewing and consolidating findings from multiple SRMAs²⁹, can provide higher-level evidence, offering clearer insights for prevention and management. Hence, this systematic meta-review aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of turmeric in improving glycemic control, lipid profiles, and other metabolic markers in patients with T2DM or hyperglycemia.

METHODS

This meta-review followed a systematic approach to synthesize the evidence and used the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a rigorous and transparent process.

Protocol and Search Strategy

Publications were systematically identified by searching seven databases: PubMed/Medline, the Cochrane

Library, Web of Science, EMBASE, SCOPUS, CINAHL, and Google Scholar for peer-reviewed research articles. The search employed both MeSH terms and free-text keywords, including “*Curcuma longa*”, “Curcumin”, “Curcuminoids”, “Turmeric”, “*Curcuma*”, “Diabetes”, “Type 2 Diabetes”, “T2DM”, “Antidiabetic”, “Antimetabolic”, “Metabolic Effects”, “Hyperglycemia”, “Dysglycemia” and related synonyms. Boolean operators (AND, OR, and NOT) were used to optimize the search results, with specific strategies outlined in [Supplementary file 1](#) the reference list of all included studies was manually screened to identify any further relevant reviews. The studies were manually screened to identify any further relevant reviews. This study has been registered in PROSPERO (CRD42024468881).

Eligibility criteria

Population or Participants: Adult patients aged ≥ 18 years with T2DM or metabolic disorders that are associated with hyperglycemia or hyperlipidemia were included, while studies focusing on patients with type 1 diabetes, prediabetes, or gestational diabetes were excluded.

Interventions: The primary intervention of interest was *Curcuma longa* (turmeric) as a whole or its extract in the form of curcumin or curcuminoids or any other form administered in any form (e.g., capsules, powder, or syrup) and at any dosage. Reviews that included studies where curcumin was combined with other active pharmacological agents were excluded unless the data specifically reported the effects of curcumin alone.

Comparator: The outcomes of the studies were compared with those of the control group, which may have been either placebo, no treatment, standard treatment, or other antidiabetic therapies.

Outcome measures: The primary outcomes included diabetic profile markers, including fasting blood glucose (FBG), fasting insulin (FIL), and glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) levels. In addition to these primary outcomes, surrogate markers of insulin resistance, the homeostatic model of insulin resistance (HOMA-IR) and the quantitative insulin sensitivity check index (QUICKI) were included. Similarly, the secondary outcomes were lipid profiles, including serum cholesterol levels; total cholesterol (TC), triglyceride (TG), low-density lipoprotein (LDL), high-density lipoprotein (HDL), blood pressure (BP), and body mass index (BMI); and associated adverse events and safety data.

Study types: This meta-review included only SRMAs from RCTs evaluating the antidiabetic and metabolic effects of curcumin in patients with hyperglycemia, regardless of language. Reviews or meta-analyses that included studies other than RCTs, animal studies, in vitro studies, and RCTs with intervention durations of less than 4 weeks were excluded. Studies published from inception until December 31, 2023, were included.

Study selection process

Two independent reviewers screened the titles and abstracts of all the identified studies. Systematic selection of articles among different reviewers was performed via the Rayyan online software.³⁰ Full-text articles were retrieved for studies that met the inclusion criteria or when eligibility was unclear. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion or consultation with a third reviewer. PRISMA flow diagram 2020³¹ was used to document the selection process, including the number of studies identified, screened, included, and excluded, along with the reasons for exclusions.

Data Extraction

Data were independently extracted via a standardized spreadsheet by two reviewers, with discrepancies and disagreements resolved through discussion with a third reviewer. The following data were extracted into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet:

Study characteristics: Title of the study, author(s), publication year, country, study population, intervention, comparator, primary and secondary outcomes, and conclusion of the study.

Participant characteristics: Population, number of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) included in each SRMA, sample size (intervention and control group), and age.

Intervention characteristics: Type (whole turmeric powder, extract, curcumin, or curcuminoids), dosage, duration of intervention/treatment, and form of administration.

Outcome of metabolic profiles: Diabetic profile markers (FBG, HbA1c, F1L, QUICKI, and HOMA-IR), lipid profiles (TC, TG, LDL, and HDL), BMI, and any reported adverse events and safety data.

Assessment of quality of included SRMAs using the AMSTAR-2 tool

The quality of each included SRMA was assessed via the 'A Measurement Tool to Assess Systematic Reviews'v (AMSTAR 2) tool, which evaluates criteria across 16 quality domains, such as study selection, risk of bias assessment, data synthesis, and overall review quality³². Each domain was rated as Yes (Y), Partially Yes (PY), or No (N). The resulting overall ratings were categorized as high, moderate, or low quality on the basis of the following criteria.

High Quality: No critical flaws and minimal noncritical weaknesses.

Moderate Quality: No critical flaws but more than minimal noncritical weaknesses.

Low Quality: At least one critical flaw, but some strengths in other areas.

Data Synthesis and Statistical Analysis

For the qualitative data, a narrative synthesis was conducted to summarize key findings across the included systematic reviews, providing a comprehensive overview of the various interventions, study populations, and outcomes reported. To ensure accuracy and avoid duplication, all duplicate RCTs were removed from the extraction sheet, eliminating any overlap in studies before performing the meta-analysis.

Meta-analysis for quantitative data was conducted using STATA 17 software. Pooled effect sizes for outcomes were calculated via a random-effects model to account for variability among studies, as the included studies differed in methods, populations, and settings. The effect size of continuous outcomes was calculated with mean differences (MDs) and their 95% confidence intervals (CIs) to summarize the effects across studies. Heterogeneity among studies was assessed via the I² statistic; an I² value greater than 50% indicated substantial heterogeneity, and a p-value less than 0.05 was assumed to be significant. A forest plot was used to visually present the MD pooled effect sizes and their 95% CIs. All analyses adhered to standard meta-analytic guidelines, and the results were interpreted in the context of the observed heterogeneity and study quality.

RESULTS

The comprehensive literature search resulted in 3534 articles, as described in the PRISMA flow chart in Figure 1. Title and abstract screening were conducted on 2146 articles, with 1388 duplicates removed. Subsequently, 85 full-text articles were reviewed in detail, leading to

the inclusion of 13 articles for this meta-review based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The reasons for exclusion during the full-text screening process are provided in [Supplementary file 2](#) and illustrated in Figure 1.

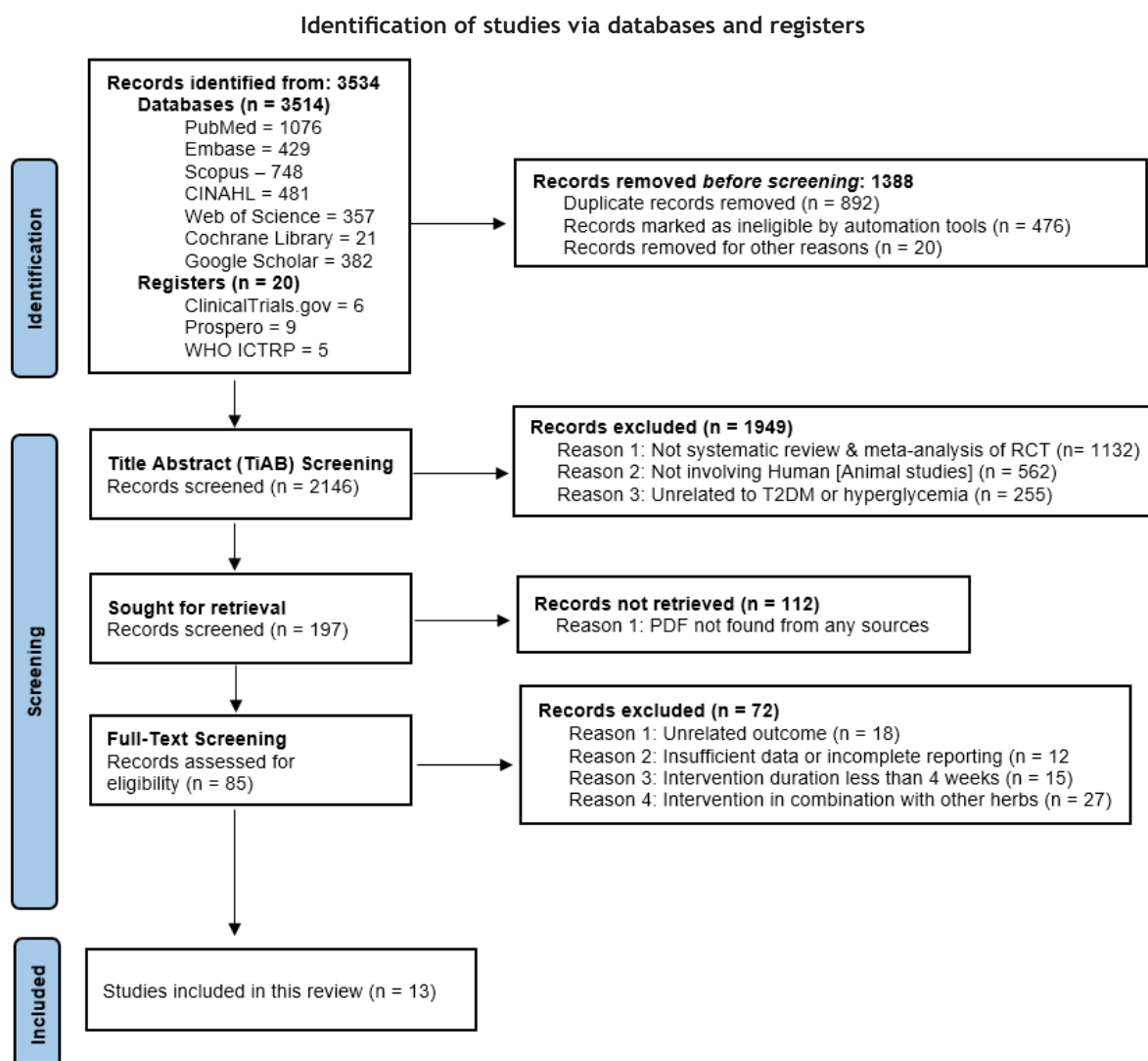


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for study selection from the literature search, selection, and inclusion/exclusion process.

Characteristics of the included studies

This meta-review included 13 SRMAs with 191 RCTs investigating the effects of curcumin on glycemic control and related outcomes. The number of RCTs included in each SRMA varied widely, ranging from 3 to 59 per SRMA. Intervention durations ranged from 4 to 48 weeks, reflecting a combination of short- and long-term studies assessing the efficacy of curcumin. The conclusions drawn from the included SRMAs are also noted. (Table 1).

During the data extraction process, it was observed that the same RCT was reported by multiple SRMAs. A detailed examination was conducted to identify duplicates to ensure the accuracy and reliability of pooled analyses, leaving 63 unique RCTs from which data on primary and secondary outcomes were extracted for further analyses. These 63 trials were conducted across diverse countries, with sample sizes ranging from 20-797 individuals, with a combined total of 3706, with 1878 in the intervention groups and 1828 in the control groups. Most RCTs compared curcumin or turmeric to a placebo, with a few studies using active controls (e.g., metformin). Major findings across studies indicated significant improvements in FBG, HbA1c, lipid parameters, and inflammation markers in the intervention

Table 1. General characteristics of the included systematic reviews and meta-analyses (SRMAs) of randomized control trials. (RCTs)

S N	Author Year	Country	Search duration	Total Participants (N)	N (Interv.)	N (control)	Population	Mean age of the participants	Intervention	Outcome	Adverse events	Duration (weeks)	No. of RCT included	Conclusion of the included systematic reviews and meta-analyses (SRMA)
1	de Melo ISV, 2018 ²²	Brazil	inception to July 2017	1,157	775	782	pre-DM, T2DM, hyperlipidemia, MetS, high ALT, NAFLD, Alzheimer	53.02	curcuminoids, isolated curcumin, turmeric extract	FBG, HbA1C, HOMA	Not reported	4-36	11	Isolated curcumin or curcuminoids alone or in combination significantly reduce the FBG and HbA1c in the patient with dysglycemia.
2	Tabrizi R, 2018 ⁵⁴	Iran	inception to January 2018	1790	896	894	hyperlipidemia, T2DM, ACS, MetS, Obese, overweight, diabetic nephropathy, NAFLD, CAD		curcuminoids, curcumin capsule, nanocurcumin, curcuminoids + bioperine, turmeric powder + metformin, turmeric powder	FBG, HbA1C, HDL-C, HOMA- IR, LDL-C, TC, TG	Not reported	4-36	26	Consumption of curcumin significantly reduces FBG, HOMA-IR, HbA1c, TG, and TC levels among patients with MetS and related disorders, however, it does not work for LDL-C and HDL-C levels.
3	Huang J, 2019 ⁸⁴	China	inception to June 2018	1296	651	645	T2DM, MetS, NAFLD, hyperlipidemia, CAD, high ALT	51.29	combined curcuminoids (std. curcumin 70-1890 mg/d), nanomicelle curcumin, turmeric powder (std. curcuminoids 1500-3000 mg/d)	FBG, HbA1C, HOMA	Mild intensity and short duration reported in the intervention group.	4-12	14	Curcumin or combined curcuminoids improves glucose metabolism in patients at risk for cardiovascular disease, and hence it could exert cardioprotective effects
4	Sousa 2020 ⁹⁰	Brazil	not indicated	21	11	10	T2DM	--	Ethanoic extract	FBG, TC, TG, HDL, LDL, BMI	Not reported	4-8	11	Turmeric (<i>Curcuma longa</i>) and Passion Fruit Peel (<i>Passiflora edulis</i>) powder showed significant effects on glycemic control rather than lipid metabolism.
5	Altobelli E, 2021 ⁹⁵	Italy	2000 to 20 May 2014	590	296	294	T2DM	57.62	curcumin capsule, nanocurcumin, turmeric powder	BMI, HbA1C, HDL-C, HOMA, LDL-C, TC, TG	Not reported	8-24	7	It benefits glucose metabolism more than lipid metabolism. Daily supplement of curcumin could improve glycemic profiles in uncomplicated T2DM patients.

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6	Chien 2021 ⁵⁷	Taiwan	inception through 28 November 2020.	168	87	81	PCOS	26.1	Curcumin (100 - 2000 mg)	BMI, HbA1C, FIL, HDL, HOMA, LDL, TC, TG	Not reported	6-12	3	Curcumin may improve glycemic control and lipid metabolism in the patients with PCOS and metabolic abnormality without significant adverse effects.
7	Jie 2021 ⁵⁸	China	inception to July 30, 2021.	290	155	135	DKD		Curcumin, Turmeric capsule 1500 mg/day, Nanocurcumin capsule 80 mg/d	Scr, BUN, TC, TG, HDL, LDL, FBG, SBP, DBP	Not reported	4-12	5	Curcumin supplementation provides significant improvements in the Scr, TC, DBP, and FBG levels in patients with DKD, with moderate certainty of evidence.
8	Zhang T, 2022 ⁶⁰	China	inception to 3 September 2020	608	303	305	T2DM	53.52	curcuminoids, curcumin, curcuminoid- piperine, turmeric	FBG, HbA1C, HDL, HOMA- IR, LDL-C, TC, TG	Mild adverse events reported in both groups.	8-24	12	Curcumin may assist in improving the insulin resistance, glycemic control, and decreased TG and TC in patients with T2DM.
9	Zheng ZH, 2021 ⁵⁹	China	inception to December 2020	533	267	266	T2DM	53.83	C3 complex + Bioperine, Theracurmin, curcumin supplement, turmeric capsule	BMI, FBG, HbA1C, HDL-C, LDL-C, TC, TG	Not reported	8-24	8	Curcumin can effectively improve multiple biochemical indices in patients with type 2 diabetes and reduce the risk of CVD and risk of T2DM supporting its potential as an adjunct therapy.
10	Ashtary- Larky D, 2021 ⁸⁵	Iran	inception to May 2021	510	269	241	NAFLD, Mets, T2DM, Migraine, T2DM on dialysis	50.52	nanocurcumin	FBG, HDL- C, LDL-C, SBR, TC, TG	Not reported	6-12	9	Nanocurcumin supplementation improves glycemic and lipid profiles hence reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

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11	Tian J, 2022 ⁸⁶	Iran	inception to March 2022	565	284	281	T2DM	41- 60.95	turmeric, curcuminoids, and curcumin, nano- curcumin	TG, LDL, HDL, HbA1c, FBG	Not reported	4-12	9	Curcumin has promising effects on improving diabetic and lipid profiles in patients with T2DM, and hence can be used as potential therapeutic options of T2DM.
12	Yuan F, 2022 ⁸⁶	China	not indicated	1509	752	757	T2DM, MetS, Overweight, Obese, NAFLD, hyperlipidemia, pre-DM	50.03	curcuminoids, curcumin, curcuminoid- piperine, nano- curcuminoids, turmeric	FBG, HbA1C	Not reported	4-24	17	Turmeric and curcuminoids decrease FBG, insulin, HbA1c and HOMA-IR significantly and the effect is more pronounced if used for more than 8 weeks.
13	Dehzad 2023 ⁸⁷	Iran	inception up to October 2022.	3879	1962	1918	Patient with disturbed glycemia	18-65	Curcumin, Turmeric, curcuminoids	FBG, HbA1C, FLI, HOMA-IR	Not reported	4-36	59	Turmeric/curcumin significantly reduces FBG, insulin, HbA1c and HOMA- IR, hence can be use as a complementary therapy for dysglycemia.
				Total no. of participants	12,917	5933	5827	Total No. RCTs included in 13 included SRMA				191	Duplicate RCTs = 128 (excluded) % Duplication of RCTS = 128/191*100 = 67% Include RCTS = 191-128 = 63	

groups ([Supplementary file S3](#)).

The types of curcumin used in the intervention groups and their respective dose ranges were as follows: curcuminoid 70 mg/day to 1795 mg/day, curcumin 1000 mg/day to 1500 mg/day, curcuminoid-piperine 500-5 mg/day to 1000-10 mg/day, nanocurcumin 80 mg/day, phospholipidated curcumin 200 mg/day to 330 mg/day, turmeric 1500 mg/day to 2400 mg/day, and unformulated curcumin 1000 mg/day. The control groups in the studies received either a placebo or standard diabetes treatment (e.g., biguanide or sulfonylurea group drugs). Supplementary presents a detailed overview of the 63 included RCTs ([Supplementary file S3](#)).

[Supplementary file 4](#) summarizes the findings from the included SRMAs on the glycemic and metabolic effects of curcumin or turmeric in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) or related conditions. It highlights outcomes such as FBG, HbA1c, insulin resistance (HOMA-IR), BMI, and lipid profiles (TC, TG, LDL, HDL). The results include mean differences with confidence intervals, heterogeneity (I^2), and analysis models, showing consistent improvements in glycemic and lipid parameters across most SRMAs. Among the 63 included RCTs, approximately half [30 (47.6%)] had an intervention duration of less than 12 weeks, with the minimum duration being 4 weeks³³⁻³⁶ and the maximum duration being 48 weeks³⁷. Similarly, 24 (38%) of the RCTs focused on T2DM patients^{33-36,38-53} ([Supplementary file S4](#)).

[Supplementary file S5](#) presents a quality assessment of the 13 SRMAs included in the meta-review. Five SRMAs (de Melo 2018²², Tabrizi 2018⁵⁴, Altobelli 2021⁵⁵, Tian 2022⁵⁶, and Dehzad 2023²⁴) were rated as high quality owing to strong adherence to the AMSTAR-2 criteria, including rigorous protocol registration, comprehensive literature searches, and appropriate meta-analytic methods. Another six studies (Chien 2021⁵⁷, Jie 2021⁵⁸, Zheng 2021⁵⁹, Ashtary 2021, Yuan 2022, and Huang 2019) were of moderate quality, whereas two studies (Sousa 2020, Zhang 2022) were rated as low quality. Further details of the findings are depicted in [Supplementary file S5](#).

[Supplementary file S6](#) provides a comprehensive PRISMA 2020 checklist detailing the adherence of the meta-review to established guidelines for reporting systematic reviews.

Outcome Measurement

The primary outcomes commonly assessed across these studies included glycemic control (FBG, HbA1c, insulin,

HOMA-IR, and QUICKI). In addition to primary outcomes, several reviews also assessed secondary outcomes, including lipid profiles (TG, total cholesterol, HDL, and LDL), renal function indicators (BUN, serum creatinine, and proteinuria), and BMI. The unit of measurement for FBS, TG, TC, HDL, LDL, BUN, and SC is mg/dL. Similarly, the unit of measurement for insulin is micro-IU/dL, HbA1c is expressed as a percentage, and proteinuria is expressed in grams/24 hours. As ratio measures, the HOMA-IR and QUICKI are unitless.

Glycemic profile

Glycated hemoglobin (HbA1C) Level

An analysis of 26 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric significantly decreased HbA1c levels in the intervention group (MD = -0.31 mg/dL; 95% CI = -0.57, -0.05; I^2 = 96.27%) (Figure 2a)

Fasting Blood Sugar (FBS) Level

The pooled results from 53 RCTs revealed that, compared with placebo or standard treatment, curcumin significantly reduced FBG levels (MD = -6.30 mg/dL; 95% CI: -9.33, -3.27; I^2 = 96.86%). (Figure 2b)

Fasting Insulin Level (FIL)

An analysis of 28 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect fasting serum insulin levels (MD = -0.58; 95 mIU/L, 95% CI = -1.16, 0.00; I^2 = 91.83%) (Figure 2c).

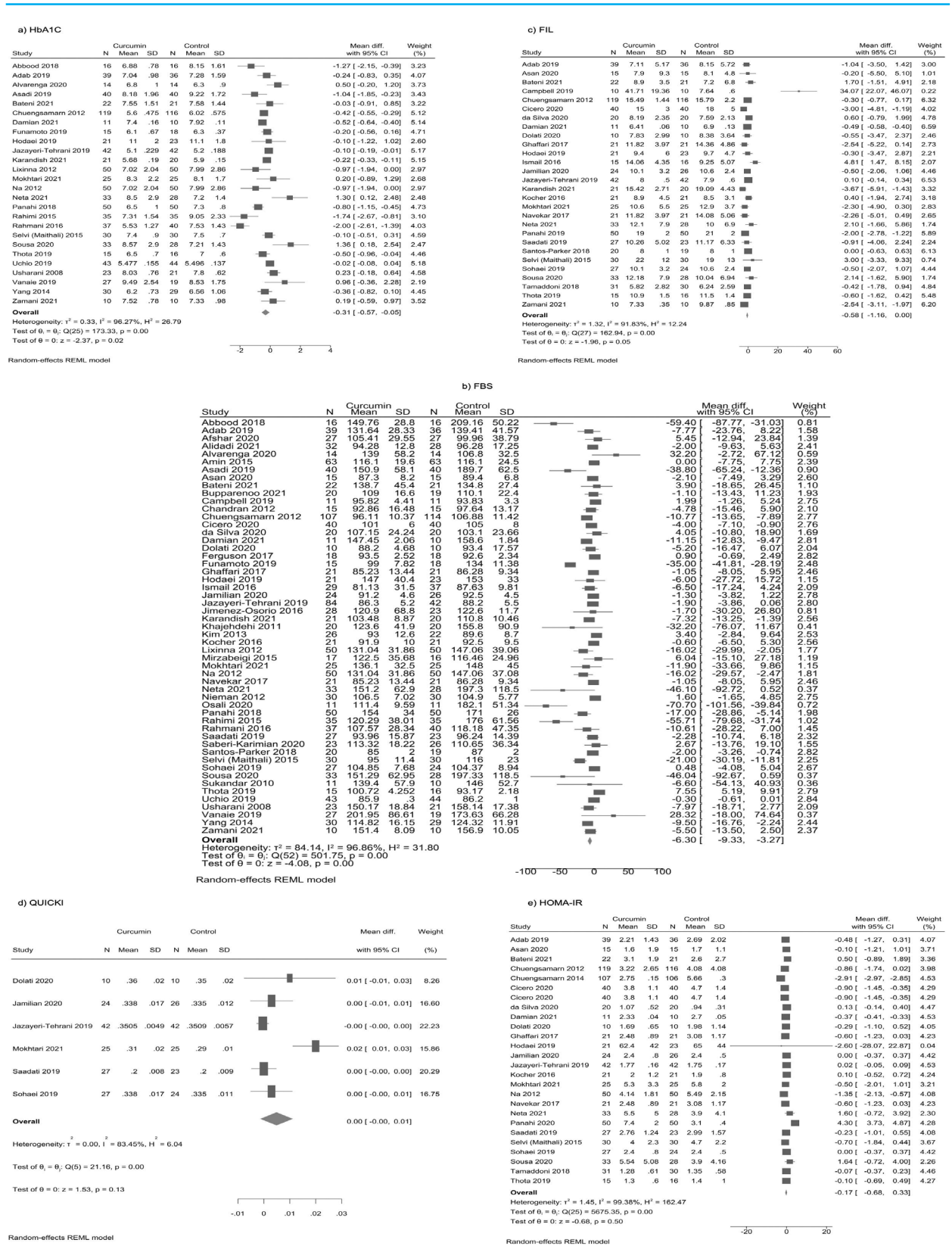
Quantitative Insulin Sensitivity Check Index (QUICKI)

An analysis of six RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect the QUICKI levels in the intervention group (MD = 0.00; 95% CI: -0.00, 0.01; I^2 = 83.45%) (Figure 2d).

Homeostatic Model Assessment of Insulin Resistance (HOMA-IR)

An analysis of 26 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect the HOMA-IR level in the intervention group (MD = -0.17; 95% CI: -0.68, 0.33; I^2 = 99.38%) (Figure 2e).

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Lipid profile:**High Density Lipoprotein (HDL) Level**

An analysis of 45 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric significantly increased HDL levels (MD = 1.46 mg/dL; 95% CI: 0.37, 2.56; $I^2 = 74.28\%$) in the intervention group (Figure 3a).

Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) Level

Analysis of 44 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric significantly decreased LDL levels in the intervention group (MD = -5.95 mg/dL; 95% CI: -9.43, -2.47; $I^2 = 74.61\%$). (Figure 3b).

Triglyceride (TG) Level

Analysis of 43 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric significantly decreased the TG level in the intervention group (MD = -12.88 mg/dL; 95% CI: -20.09, -5.67; $I^2 = 93.42\%$) (Figure 3c).

Total Cholesterol (TC) Level

Analysis of 42 RCTs revealed that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not significantly affect TC (MD = -3.87 mg/dL; 95% CI: -11.08, 3.34; $I^2 = 93.41\%$) (Figure 3d).

Renal markers:**Serum Creatinine (SCT) Level**

An analysis of five RCTs indicated that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect the serum creatinine level between the curcumin group and the control group (MD = -0.11 mg/dL; 95% CI: -0.25, 0.03; $I^2 = 83.57\%$) (Figure 4a).

Proteinuria

Analysis of three RCTs indicated that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect DBP levels between the curcumin and control groups (MD = -0.18 gm/24 hours; 95% CI: -0.38, 0.03; $I^2 = 0\%$) (Figure 4b).

Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN) Level

Three RCTs reported no difference in BUN between the intervention and control groups (MD = 0.55 mg/dL; 95% CI = -1.02, 2.13; $I^2 = 0\%$) (Figure 4c).

Blood pressure:**Systolic Blood Pressure (SBP)**

An analysis of nine RCTs indicated that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect SBP between the curcumin and control groups (MD = -2.69 mmHg; 95% CI: -6.10, 0.71; $I^2 = 84.40\%$) (Figure 6a).

Diastolic Blood Pressure (DBP)

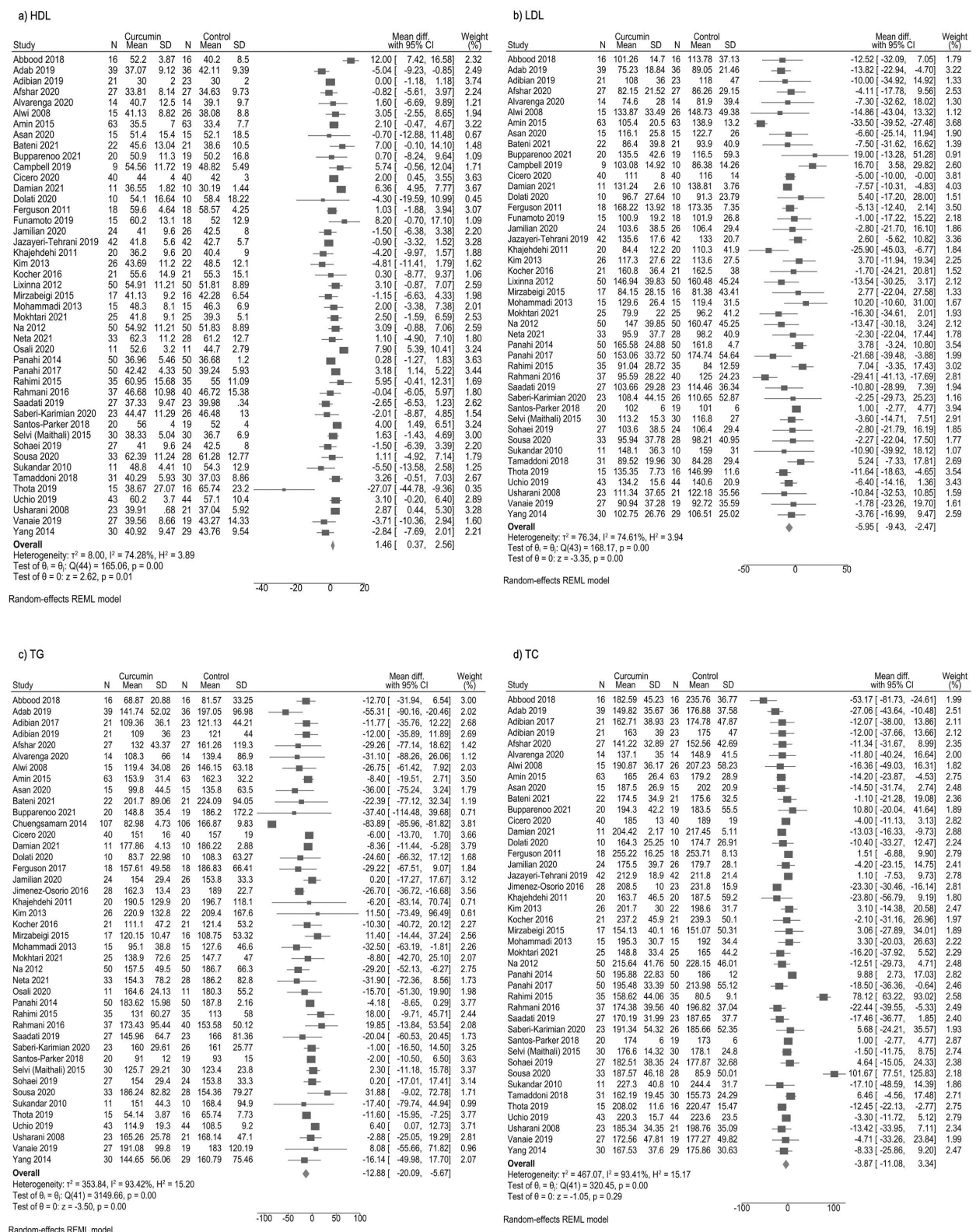
An analysis of eight RCTs indicated that supplementation with curcumin/turmeric did not affect DBP levels between the curcumin and control groups (MD = -0.28 mmHg; 95% CI: -2.97, 2.40; $I^2 = 88.26\%$) (Figure 6b).

Adverse Events and Safety

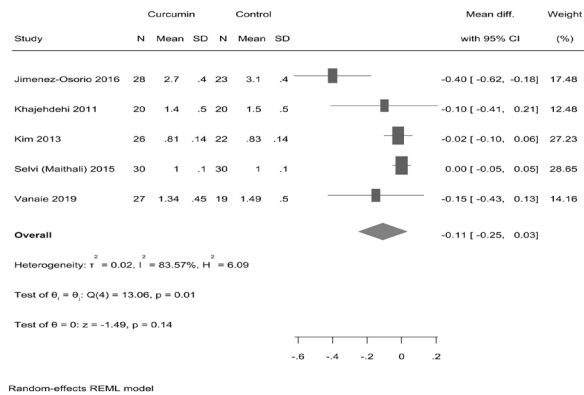
Qualitative data synthesis was performed for the adverse events and safety profile analysis. In terms of safety, curcumin was generally well tolerated across all included studies. Adverse events, including gastrointestinal discomfort and nausea, were rare and mostly mild. No serious adverse effects were reported, and curcumin supplementation was considered safe for use at doses of up to 2500 mg per day (Table 1, Supplementary file S3).

Body Mass Index (BMI)

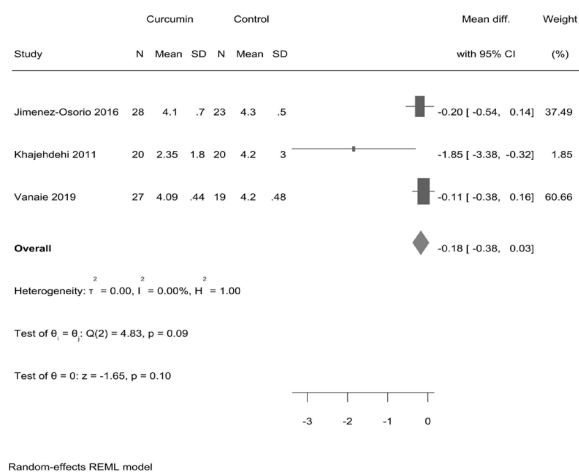
The effect of curcumin/turmeric supplementation on the BMI of participants with T2DM was analyzed across the included SRMAs. The pooled results from 20 RCTs revealed no significant effect of curcumin on BMI (MD = -0.47 kg/m², 95% CI: -0.99, 0.04, $I^2 = 58.42\%$) (Figure 5).



a. Creatinine



b. Proteinuria



c. BUN

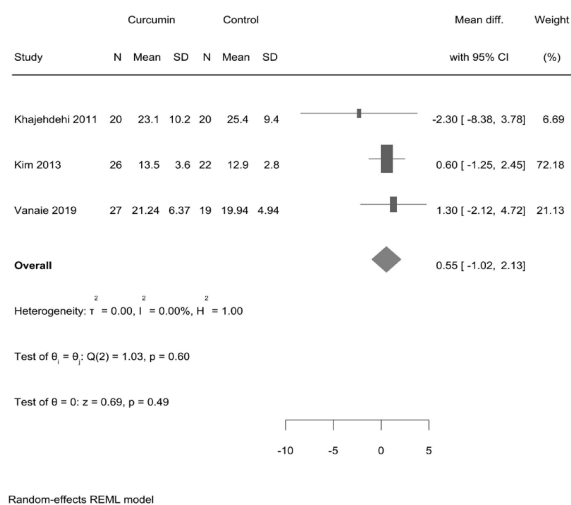


Figure 4. Forest plot showing the mean difference and in renal parameters a) Creatinine, b) Proteinuria c) BUN, between the Curcuma longa supplementation group and the control group.

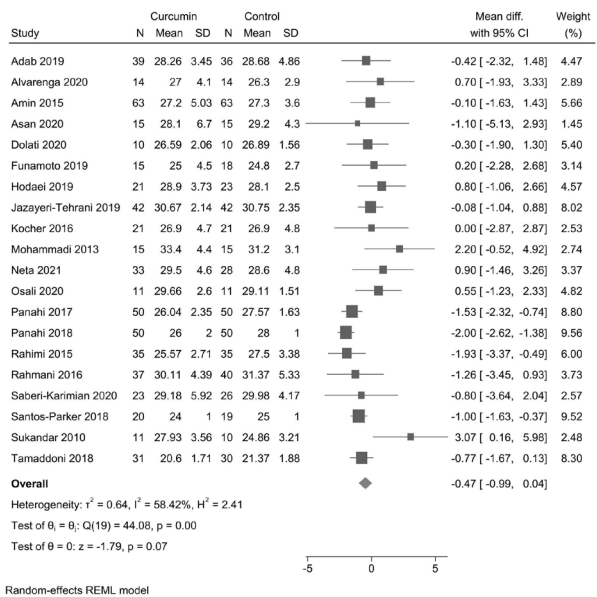


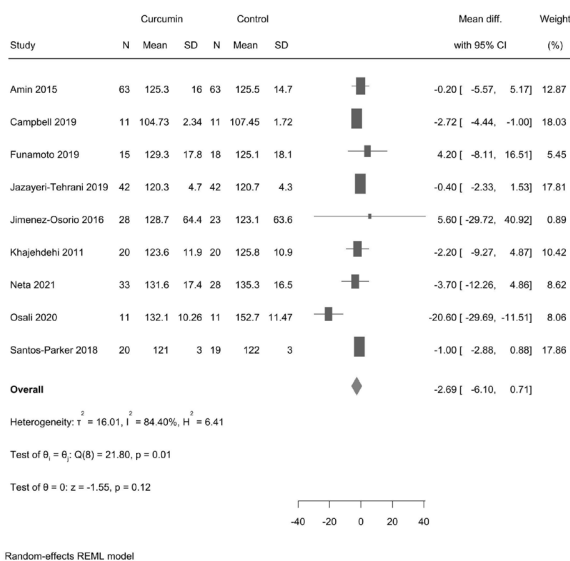
Figure 5. Forest plot showing the mean difference in BMI between the Curcuma longa supplementation group and the control group.

DISCUSSION

This meta-review synthesized data from 13 SRMAs to assess the potential antidiabetic and metabolic effects of curcumin/turmeric in patients with T2DM or hyperglycemia. The analyses revealed a significant effect of curcumin/turmeric supplementation on FBG (decrease), HbA1c (decrease), HDL (increase), LDL (decrease), and TG (decrease) in the intervention groups. However, no significant changes were observed in insulin levels, renal markers, BMI, or blood pressure. These results provide evidence supporting the potential role of curcumin in improving glycemic control and metabolic profiles in T2DM and hyperglycemic patients.

The meta-analysis revealed a significant reduction in FBG levels compared with placebo or standard treatment following curcumin supplementation. This finding aligns with the hypothesis that curcumin enhances insulin sensitivity and modulates glucose metabolism.⁶⁰⁻⁶² The anti-inflammatory properties of curcumin^{63,64} and its ability to downregulate cytokine production^{65,66} and improve endothelial function likely contribute to these effects.^{3,67,68} However, studies using higher doses of curcumin (≥ 500 mg/day) formulations with enhanced bioavailability have shown more pronounced reductions in FBG, indicating a potential dose-response relationship.^{27,28,69}

a. SBP



b. DBP

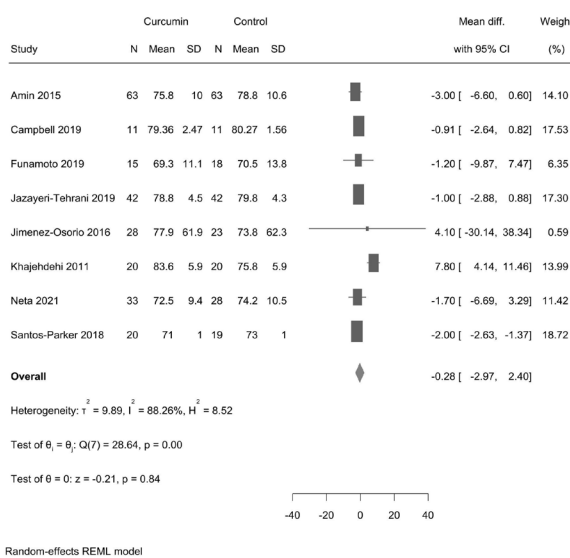


Figure 6. Forest plot showing the mean difference in blood pressure a) SBP and b) DBP between the *Curcuma longa* supplementation group and the control group.

This study revealed a significant reduction in HbA1c levels associated with curcumin/turmeric supplementation, which aligns with a growing body of literature supporting the role of curcumin in improving glycemic control in patients with T2DM. A systematic review supported our results, demonstrating that curcumin supplementation significantly reduced both

FBG and HbA1c levels in multiple studies, highlighting its potential as an effective intervention for glycemic management in T2DM patients.⁷⁰ For HbA1c, a marker of long-term glycemic control, curcumin supplementation significantly decreased HbA1c, particularly in studies with longer intervention durations (≥ 12 weeks), such as the study by Chuengsamarn et al.^{40,71} These effects can be attributed to the anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties of curcumin, which reduce oxidative stress and improve β -cell function.^{5,72} HbA1c reductions are critical in mitigating the long-term complications of diabetes, such as neuropathy, retinopathy, and cardiovascular diseases.^{40,73}

Conversely, the effect of curcumin on FIL level was not significant in the pooled analysis. While curcumin may improve insulin sensitivity, its direct effects on insulin secretion may be limited. This result is consistent with the findings of Pathomwachaiwat et al.,^{28,74} who noted that the primary mechanism of action of curcumin may lie in reducing insulin resistance rather than stimulating insulin production. Similarly, turmeric/curcumin supplementation not only reduces HbA1c levels but also positively impacts fasting insulin levels and homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance (HOMA-IR)^{24,75}. These findings suggest that curcumin may enhance insulin sensitivity and contribute to improved metabolic profiles. Additionally, the anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties of curcumin play crucial roles in mitigating oxidative stress and inflammation, which are key contributors to the pathophysiology of diabetes.

The effect of curcumin on lipid profiles was mixed. Significant reductions in LDL and improvements in TG and HDL levels were noted. These findings align with those of Kocaadam and Şanlıer^{26,73}, who suggested that the lipid-lowering effects of curcumin are more prominent in LDL reduction, potentially through its role in inhibiting lipid peroxidation and modulating enzymes involved in lipid metabolism. However, variability in outcomes may be attributable to differences in curcumin formulation, dosage, and study populations, with some studies using enhanced curcumin formulations (e.g., nanocurcumin, curcumin-phospholipid complexes), dosage, and duration of treatment.⁶

In terms of renal function markers, curcumin/turmeric supplementation did not affect outcomes such as BUN, creatinine, or proteinuria. While some studies reported slight decreases, others reported no significant effects. Chronic hyperglycemia in T2DM patients can lead to renal damage via increased production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and other glycation end products.^{76,77} The

ability of curcumin to neutralize ROS and downregulate inflammatory pathways may thus play a role in reducing the levels of BUN and creatinine.⁶⁶ Curcumin may act as an adjuvant therapy for the treatment of proteinuria in T2DM patients, but effects may take two months or longer.⁷⁸

The impact of curcumin on BMI was not significant in this meta-review. This finding is consistent with those of previous studies suggesting that curcumin may not directly facilitate weight reduction.^{20,79} Given that weight loss is a critical factor in managing T2DM, the lack of significant effects on BMI suggests that curcumin should not be relied upon as a standalone treatment for weight management. Its ability to improve metabolic markers may still play a role in improving metabolic health indirectly by enhancing insulin sensitivity and reducing inflammation.^{16,79,80}

The included studies reported that curcumin was generally well tolerated, with no serious adverse effects observed. Mild gastrointestinal discomfort was the most common side effect, which is consistent with the findings of previous trials.^{12,20} However, long-term safety data, particularly at higher doses, remain limited and warrant further investigation. However, the overall safety profile of curcumin makes it a promising adjunct therapy for T2DM patients, particularly those seeking alternatives to standard pharmacological treatments with a greater risk of side effects.^{20,25,81}

Despite the valuable insights into the antidiabetic and metabolic effects of curcumin from this meta-review, several limitations exist. First, there was significant heterogeneity across the included RCTs, particularly in terms of curcumin dosages, formulations (e.g., nanoparticles, phospholipid complexes), and treatment duration. Future research should aim to standardize these factors to better assess their therapeutic potential. Second, some studies included small sample sizes or presented a high risk of bias. This limitation emphasizes the need for more rigorous RCTs with larger sample sizes and standardized methodologies. Finally, most studies have focused only on short-term outcomes, leaving uncertainties regarding the long-term efficacy and safety of curcumin.^{78,82-86}

CONCLUSIONS

This meta-review concludes that curcumin, the active compound in turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) supplementation offers significant benefits in improving glycemic control, insulin sensitivity and lipid markers like TG, TC, LDL, HDL. However, its effects on renal makers,

BMI, and blood pressure are inconsistent, highlighting the need for further research to confirm these findings and optimize dosing regimens. Moreover the efficacy of the crude powder of turmeric remain to be explored. Given its safety profile and the magnitude of its effects on key diabetic markers, curcumin shows promise as an adjunct therapy for managing T2DM. Nevertheless, the heterogeneity in study designs, curcumin formulations, and patient populations across the included studies. underscores the importance of standardizing future clinical trials to fully elucidate the therapeutic potential of curcumin

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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