EJPMR, 2026, 13(3), 144-158 **Research Article** **Impact Factor: 8.158**

EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF PHARMACEUTICAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

www.ejpmr.com

ISSN (O): 2394-3211
ISSN (P): 3051-2573
Coden USA: EJPMAG

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY ACTIVITY AND BIOCHEMICAL MODULATION BY CURCUMIN, BOSWELLIA SERRATA EXTRACT, AND THEIR COMBINATION IN INFLAMMATORY RAT MODELS

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18796238

How to cite this Article: Aditya Gupta[1], Dr. Shilpi Sharma*[2]. (2026). Anti-Inflammatory Activity And Biochemical Modulation By Curcumin, Boswellia Serrata Extract, And Their Combination In Inflammatory Rat Models. European Journal of Pharmaceutical and Medical Research, 13(3), 144–158.

Article Received on 02/02/2026 **Article Revised on 23/02/2026** **Article Published on 01/03/2026**

ABSTRACT

Chronic inflammation underlies numerous debilitating conditions, including arthritis and other inflammatory disorders, where conventional treatments like NSAIDs often cause adverse effects. Natural compounds such as curcumin from *Curcuma longa* and boswellic acids from *Boswellia serrata* exhibit promising anti-inflammatory properties through complementary mechanisms—curcumin primarily inhibits NF-κB and COX-2 pathways, while boswellic acids target 5-LOX and leukotriene synthesis—suggesting potential synergism. This study evaluated the anti-inflammatory effects of curcumin (100 or 200 mg/kg), *Boswellia serrata* extract (100 or 200 mg/kg), and their combinations (100+100 or 200+200 mg/kg) in male Wistar rats using acute carrageenan-induced paw edema and chronic cotton pellet-induced granuloma models, with indomethacin (10 mg/kg) as a positive control. In the paw edema model, treatment dose-dependently reduced edema volume, with the high-dose combination achieving maximal inhibition (~40–50% at peak 3 h), superior to individual agents and comparable to indomethacin. In the granuloma model, the high-dose combination suppressed dry granuloma weight by 60%, outperforming monotherapy and nearing indomethacin efficacy (55.6%). Biochemical analyses revealed significant reductions in pro-inflammatory cytokines (TNF-α, IL-6, IL-1β), PGE_2 , and NO levels in serum and tissues, alongside decreased oxidative stress markers (MDA) and restoration of antioxidant defences (SOD, GSH). Synergistic effects were evident in biomarker modulation, with combinations showing greater suppression than single treatments. These findings demonstrate that the combination of curcumin and Boswellia serrata exerts potent, synergistic anti-inflammatory and antioxidant activities in both acute and chronic models, supporting its potential as a safe, multi-targeted therapeutic option for inflammatory diseases.

KEYWORDS: Curcumin, Boswellia serrata, anti-inflammatory activity, synergistic effects, rat models.

1. INTRODUCTION

Inflammation is a fundamental physiological response orchestrated by the immune system to protect against harmful stimuli, such as pathogens, damaged cells, or irritants. However, when dysregulated, chronic inflammation contributes significantly to the pathogenesis of numerous debilitating diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, and cardiovascular disorders (Peng et al., 2021). These conditions impose a substantial burden on global healthcare systems, often leading to persistent pain, tissue damage, and reduced quality of life. Conventional anti-inflammatory therapies, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as indomethacin and diclofenac, primarily target cyclooxygenase (COX) pathways to alleviate symptoms. Despite their efficacy, long-term use is associated with adverse effects, including gastrointestinal ulceration, renal toxicity, and cardiovascular risks, prompting the need for safer, natural alternatives with multi-targeted mechanisms (Bannuru et al., 2018).

Natural compounds derived from medicinal plants have garnered increasing attention for their potential to

modulate inflammatory pathways with fewer side effects. Curcumin, the principal bioactive polyphenolic compound extracted from the rhizome of turmeric (Curcuma longa), has been extensively studied for its potent anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and analgesic properties (Asadi et al., 2023). Curcumin exerts its effects by inhibiting key pro-inflammatory mediators, such as nuclear factor-kappa B (NF-κB), which regulates the expression of cytokines like tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-α), interleukin-6 (IL-6), and interleukin-1β (IL-1β), as well as enzymes including COX-2 and inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS) (Peng et al., 2021). Additionally, curcumin mitigates oxidative stress by enhancing endogenous antioxidants, such as superoxide dismutase (SOD) and glutathione (GSH), while reducing lipid peroxidation markers, such as malondialdehyde (MDA) (Asadi et al., 2023). Preclinical studies in rat models of inflammation, such as carrageenan-induced paw edema—an acute model that simulates localized inflammatory responses via histamine, serotonin, and prostaglandin release—have demonstrated curcumin's dose-dependent reduction in edema and inflammatory biomarkers (Winter et al., 1962). Similarly, in chronic models like cotton pellet-induced granuloma, which mimics proliferative and exudative phases of chronic inflammation, curcumin suppresses granuloma formation and cytokine production (Swingle & Shideman, 1972).

Boswellia serrata, commonly known as Indian frankincense, is another traditional herbal remedy with well-documented anti-inflammatory attributes. It is a gum resin extract, standardized to boswellic acids (particularly 3-O-acetyl-11-keto-β-boswellic acid, or AKBA), that selectively inhibits 5-lipoxygenase (5-LOX), thereby reducing leukotriene synthesis—a pathway complementary to COX inhibition (Siddiqui, 2011). This mechanism attenuates leukocyte infiltration, edema, and tissue damage in inflammatory conditions. Systematic reviews of clinical and preclinical data indicate that Boswellia serrata extracts effectively alleviate symptoms in osteoarthritis and other inflammatory disorders, with a favourable safety profile (Ernst, 2008). In rodent models, Boswellia serrata has been shown to reduce paw swelling in carrageenan-induced edema and to inhibit granulomatous tissue formation in the cotton pellet assay, highlighting its role in both acute and chronic inflammation (Siddiqui, 2011).

The rationale for combining curcumin and Boswellia serrata lies in their synergistic potential to target overlapping yet distinct inflammatory cascades. Curcumin primarily modulates NF-κB and COX-2, while boswellic acids focus on 5-LOX and leukotrienes, potentially offering broader spectrum inhibition of eicosanoids like prostaglandin E2 (PGE2) and nitric oxide (NO) (Haroyan et al., 2018). Meta-analyses of randomized controlled trials in knee osteoarthritis patients have revealed that curcumin-Boswellia combinations significantly outperform placebo or single agents in reducing pain and improving joint function, with enhanced bioavailability when formulated appropriately (Bannuru et al., 2018). Preclinical evidence supports this synergy; for instance, combined treatments in inflammatory models demonstrate greater reductions in cytokines and oxidative stress markers compared to monotherapy (Haroyan et al., 2018). However, gaps remain in understanding their combined effects on biochemical biomarkers in well-controlled animal models, particularly regarding dose-response relationships and long-term modulation of inflammatory pathways.

This study aims to evaluate the anti-inflammatory activity of curcumin, Boswellia serrata extract, and their combination in rat models of acute (carrageenan-induced paw edema) and chronic (cotton pellet-induced granuloma) inflammation. By assessing paw volume, granuloma weight, and biomarkers including TNF-α, IL-6, IL-1β, PGE2, NO, MDA, SOD, and GSH, we seek to elucidate the potential synergistic mechanisms and provide evidence for their therapeutic application in inflammatory diseases.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Chemicals and Plant Extracts

Curcumin (purity ≥95%) and Boswellia serrata extract (standardized to 65% boswellic acids) were procured from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO, USA). Indomethacin, diclofenac, λ-carrageenan, acetic acid, and carboxymethylcellulose (CMC) were obtained from the same supplier. Commercial enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) kits for tumour necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-α), interleukin-6 (IL-6), interleukin-1β (IL-1β), and prostaglandin E_2 (PGE_2) were purchased from R&D Systems (Minneapolis, MN, USA). Kits for nitric oxide (NO), malondialdehyde (MDA), superoxide dismutase (SOD), and glutathione (GSH) assays were obtained from Cayman Chemical (Ann Arbor, MI, USA). All other chemicals were of analytical grade. The combination treatment was prepared by mixing equal parts of curcumin and B. serrata extract in 1% CMC suspension as the vehicle, following established protocols for synergistic herbal formulations (Sethi et al., 2022; Antony et al., 2025).

2.2. Animals

Adult male Wistar rats (150–200 g) were obtained from the Central Animal House Facility of the institute. A total of 108 rats were used. Animals were housed under standard laboratory conditions (22 ± 2°C, 50–60% humidity, 12-h light/dark cycle) with ad libitum access to standard pellet diet and water. All experimental procedures were approved by the Institutional Animal Ethics Committee (IAEC) and conducted in accordance with the Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CPCSEA) guidelines (CPCSEA, 2018). Animals were acclimatized for one week prior to experiments.

2.3. Anti-Inflammatory Models

2.3.1. Carrageenan-Induced Paw Edema Model

The anti-inflammatory activity was assessed using the carrageenan-induced paw edema model (Winter et al., 1962). Rats (n = 6/group) were pretreated orally with vehicle (disease control), indomethacin (10 mg/kg; positive control), curcumin (100 or 200 mg/kg), B. serrata extract (100 or 200 mg/kg), or combinations (100 + 100 or 200 + 200 mg/kg) 1 h prior to subplantar injection of 0.1 mL 1% (w/v) λ-carrageenan in saline into the right hind paw. A normal control group received saline only. Paw volume was measured using a digital plethysmometer (Ugo Basile, Italy) at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 24 h post-injection. Edema was expressed as the increase in paw volume (mL) relative to baseline.

2.3.2. Cotton Pellet-Induced Granuloma Model

Chronic anti-inflammatory activity was evaluated using the cotton pellet-induced granuloma model (Swingle & Shideman, 1972). Sterile cotton pellets (30 ± 1 mg) were implanted subcutaneously in the dorsal region of anesthetized rats (n = 6/group). Post-implantation, animals received once-daily oral treatments for 7 days with vehicle (disease control), indomethacin (10 mg/kg), curcumin (100 or 200 mg/kg), B. serrata extract (100 or 200 mg/kg), or combinations (100 + 100 or 200 + 200 mg/kg). A normal control group received no pellets. On day 7, rats were euthanized by CO_2 inhalation, and granulomas were excised, dried at 60°C for 24 h to constant weight, and weighed.

Percent inhibition was calculated as.

[(disease control weight – treated weight) / disease control weight] × 100.

2.4. Biochemical Assays

At the end of the anti-inflammatory experiments, blood and inflamed paw/granuloma tissues were collected post-euthanasia. Serum was separated from blood by centrifugation (3000 rpm, 10 min, 4°C). Tissues were homogenized in phosphate-buffered saline (pH 7.4) with protease inhibitors, centrifuged (10,000 rpm, 15 min, 4°C), and supernatants collected. Protein content was determined using the Bradford method (Bradford, 1976). TNF-α, IL-6, IL-1β, and PGE_2 were quantified by ELISA per manufacturer instructions. NO was measured using the Griess reagent method (Green et al., 1982). MDA was assessed via thiobarbituric acid reaction (Ohkawa et al., 1979). SOD activity was determined by inhibition of nitroblue tetrazolium reduction (Beauchamp & Fridovich, 1971). GSH levels were quantified using Ellman's reagent (Ellman, 1959). These assays align with recent protocols demonstrating cytokine and oxidative stress modulation by curcumin–boswellic acid combinations (Cardeccia et al., 2022; Li et al., 2025).

2.5. Statistical Analysis

Data are presented as mean ± standard error of the mean (SEM). One-way ANOVA followed by Dunnett's or Tukey's post-hoc test was performed using GraphPad Prism software (version 9.0) to compare treated groups with controls or assess synergies. Significance was set at $p < 0.05$ (*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. corresponding single-dose treatments)

3. RESULTS

3.1. Evaluation of Anti-Inflammatory Activity

3.1.1. Carrageenan-Induced Paw Edema Model

Carrageenan (1% w/v, 0.1 mL) was injected intraplantarly into the right hind paw, and paw volume was measured by plethysmometry at 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 24 h post-injection. Rats received oral pretreatment 1 h before challenge: vehicle (disease control), indomethacin (10 mg/kg; positive control), curcumin (100 or 200 mg/kg), Boswellia serrata extract (100 or 200 mg/kg), or combinations (100+100 or 200+200 mg/kg). Edema in the disease control group peaked at 3 h (2.10 ± 0.06 mL). All treatments significantly reduced edema in a dose-dependent manner ($p < 0.05$ to $p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). The 200+200 mg/kg combination showed the strongest inhibition (~1.25 ± 0.04 mL at 3 h), comparable to indomethacin and superior to single agents, indicating potential synergism. One-way ANOVA confirmed significant treatment effects at all post-injection time points (peak at 3 h: $F(8,45) = 68.10$, $p < 0.0001$). Post-hoc Dunnett's tests verified marked reductions, with near-baseline resolution by 24 h in treated groups. These results demonstrate potent anti-inflammatory effects of curcumin, B. serrata extract, and especially their combination, likely via complementary inhibition of COX-2/NF-κB and 5-LOX pathways.

Table 1: Effect of treatments on paw volume (mL) in carrageenan-induced paw edema model.

Group	Treatment	0 h	1 h	2 h	3 h	4 h	24 h
1	Normal control	0.85 ± 0.02	0.86 ± 0.02	0.87 ± 0.03	0.88 ± 0.02	0.87 ± 0.02	0.86 ± 0.02
2	Disease control	0.86 ± 0.03	1.20 ± 0.04	1.65 ± 0.05	2.10 ± 0.06	1.95 ± 0.05	1.05 ± 0.04
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	0.85 ± 0.02	0.95 ± 0.03*	1.10 ± 0.04**	1.20 ± 0.04***	1.15 ± 0.03***	0.90 ± 0.02**
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	0.86 ± 0.02	1.10 ± 0.04	1.45 ± 0.05*	1.75 ± 0.05*	1.60 ± 0.05*	0.95 ± 0.03*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	0.85 ± 0.03	1.05 ± 0.03*	1.35 ± 0.04**	1.55 ± 0.05**	1.40 ± 0.04**	0.92 ± 0.03**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	0.86 ± 0.02	1.12 ± 0.04	1.48 ± 0.05*	1.80 ± 0.06*	1.65 ± 0.05*	0.98 ± 0.03*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	0.85 ± 0.02	1.08 ± 0.03*	1.40 ± 0.04**	1.60 ± 0.05**	1.45 ± 0.04**	0.94 ± 0.03**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	0.86 ± 0.03	1.00 ± 0.03**	1.25 ± 0.04**	1.40 ± 0.05***#	1.30 ± 0.04***#	0.90 ± 0.02**
9	Combination	0.85 ± 0.02	0.96 ± 0.03**	1.15 ±	1.25 ± 0.04***#	1.20 ± 0.03***#	0.88 ±

	(200 + 200 mg/kg)			0.04***#			0.02***#

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001 vs. disease control (Group 2); #p < 0.05 vs. corresponding single-dose treatments (ANOVA followed by Dunnett's test).

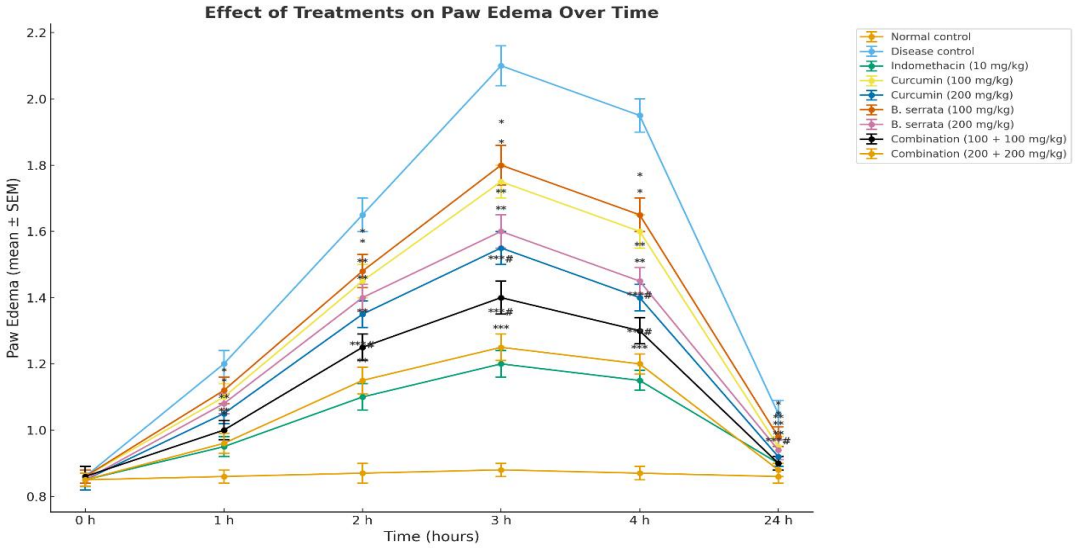

Figure 1: Effect of Treatments on Paw Edema over time.

3.1.2. Cotton Pellet-Induced Granuloma Model

Sterile cotton pellets were implanted subcutaneously in the dorsal region, and animals received once-daily oral treatment for 7 consecutive days with vehicle (disease control), indomethacin (10 mg/kg; positive control), curcumin (100 or 200 mg/kg), Boswellia serrata extract (100 or 200 mg/kg), or combinations thereof (100 + 100 or 200 + 200 mg/kg). On day 7, rats were euthanized, granulomas were excised, dried at 60°C for 24 h, and weighed to determine dry granuloma weight. Percent inhibition was calculated relative to the disease control. One-way ANOVA demonstrated highly significant treatment differences [$F(8,45) = 69.69$, $p < 0.0001$]. Dunnett's post-hoc test confirmed dose-dependent reductions in granuloma weight compared with the disease control (mean 45 ± 2 mg), while normal controls (no pellets) showed baseline tissue weight of 5 ± 1 mg. Indomethacin reduced granuloma weight to 20 ± 1 mg (55.6% inhibition, ***p < 0.001). Curcumin alone decreased weight to 35 ± 2 mg (22.2%, *p < 0.05) at 100 mg/kg and 28 ± 2 mg (37.8%, **p < 0.01) at 200 mg/kg. Boswellia serrata extract reduced weight to 36 ± 2 mg (20.0%, *p < 0.05) at 100 mg/kg and 30 ± 2 mg (33.3%, **p < 0.01) at 200 mg/kg. The combinations achieved greater suppression: 25 ± 1 mg (44.4% inhibition, ***p < 0.001; #p < 0.05 vs. single agents) at 100 + 100 mg/kg and 18 ± 1 mg (60.0% inhibition, ***p < 0.001; #p < 0.05 vs. single agents) at 200 + 200 mg/kg, with the high-dose combination approaching indomethacin efficacy.

These results indicate potent suppression of granuloma formation by curcumin and B. serrata extract, with clear synergistic effects in combination, likely due to complementary inhibition of NF-κB/COX-2/cytokine pathways (curcumin) and 5-LOX/leukotriene pathways (boswellic acids), supporting their potential as multi-target agents for chronic inflammatory disorders.

Table 2: Effect on Granuloma Dry Weight in Cotton Pellet-Induced Model.

Group	Treatment	Granuloma Weight (mg)	% Inhibition
1	Normal control	5 ± 1	-
2	Disease control	45 ± 2	-
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	20 ± 1***	55.6
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	35 ± 2*	22.2
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	28 ± 2**	37.8
6	B. serrata (100 mg/kg)	36 ± 2*	20.0
7	B. serrata (200 mg/kg)	30 ± 2**	33.3
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	25 ± 1***#	44.4
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	18 ± 1***#	60.0

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001 vs. disease control (Group 2, Dunnett's test), #p < 0.05 vs. corresponding single-dose treatments.

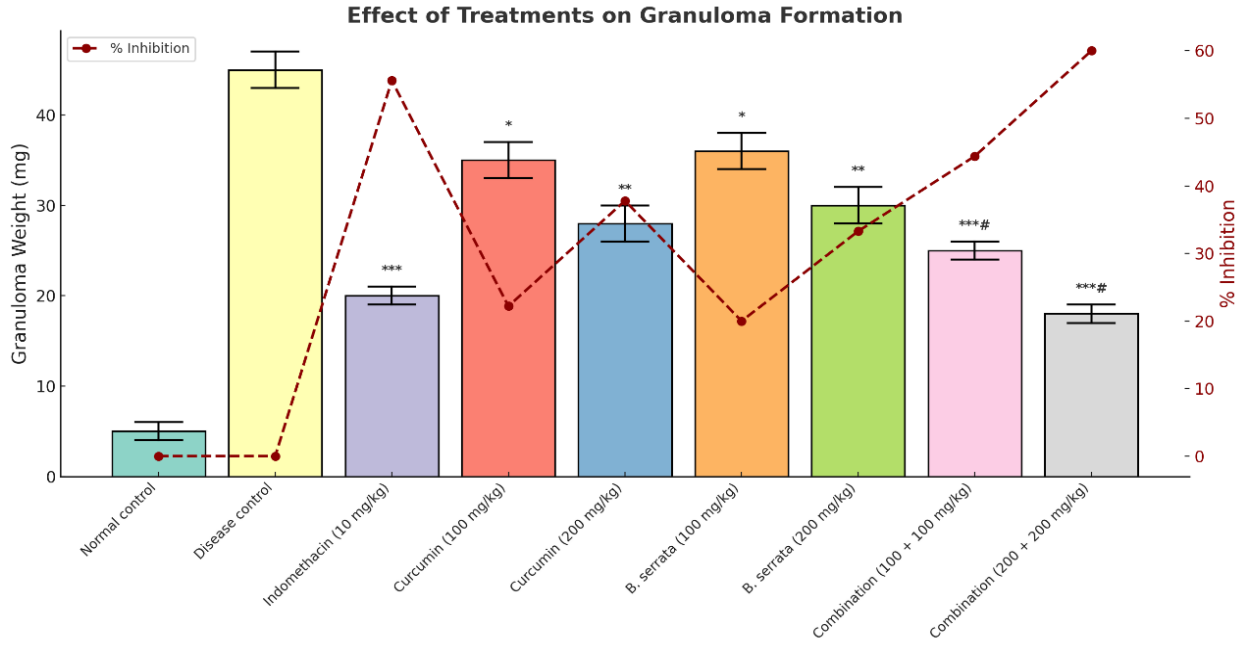

Figure 2: Effect of Treatments on Granuloma Formation.

3.2. Biochemical Estimation

3.2.1. Quantification of Inflammatory Cytokines

3.2.1.1. Tumor Necrosis Factor-α (TNF-α)

In serum, TNF-α concentrations reached 200 ± 10 pg/mL in the disease control group, representing a four-fold increase over the normal control value of 50 ± 5 pg/mL ($p < 0.001$). In paw or granuloma tissue homogenates, levels were 300 ± 15 pg/mg protein in the disease control group versus 75 ± 6 pg/mg protein in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA confirmed highly significant treatment effects in both compartments (serum: $F(8,45) = 59.12$, $p < 0.0001$; tissue: $F(8,45) = 60.34$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) substantially suppressed TNF-α, reducing serum levels by 50% to 100 ± 6 pg/mL and tissue levels by 56.7% to 130 ± 8 pg/mg protein ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin alone decreased serum TNF-α by 20% (160 ± 8 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 35% (130 ± 7 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg, with corresponding tissue reductions of 20% (240 ± 12 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) and 40% (180 ± 10 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.01$). Boswellia serrata extract produced similar dose-dependent decreases: serum reductions of 17.5% (165 ± 8 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and 32.5% (135 ± 7 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg, and tissue reductions of 16.7% (250 ± 12 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) and 36.7% (190 ± 10 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.01$).

Combination treatments exhibited enhanced suppression. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) reduced serum TNF-α by 45% (110 ± 6 pg/mL; $p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses) and tissue TNF-α by 53.3% (140 ± 8 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) achieved the greatest reductions—serum by 57.5% (85 ± 5 pg/mL; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$) and tissue by 60% (120 ± 8 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$)—closely approaching indomethacin efficacy.

Table 3: TNF-α Levels in Serum and Tissue.

Group	Treatment	Serum TNF-α (pg/mL)	Tissue TNF-α (pg/mg protein)
1	Normal control	50 ± 5	75 ± 6
2	Disease control	200 ± 10	300 ± 15
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	100 ± 6***	130 ± 8***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	160 ± 8*	240 ± 12*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	130 ± 7**	180 ± 10**
6	*B. errate* (100 mg/kg)	165 ± 8*	250 ± 12*
7	*B. errate* (200 mg/kg)	135 ± 7**	190 ± 10**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	110 ± 6***#	140 ± 8***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	85 ± 5***#	120 ± 8***#

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

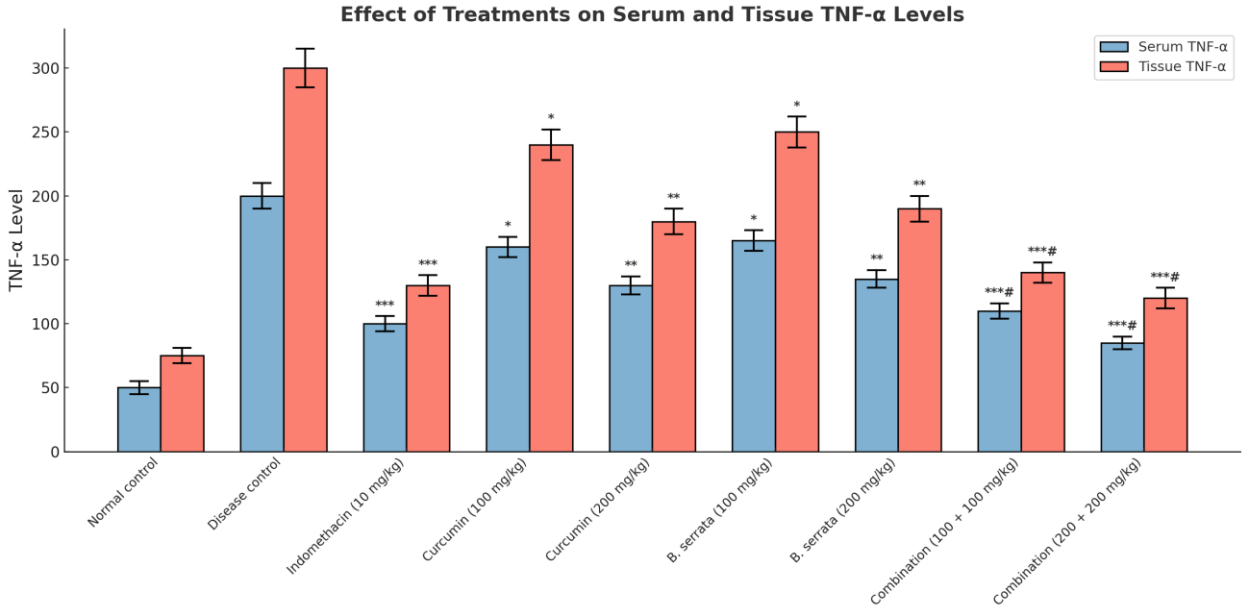

Figure 3: Effect of Treatment on serum and TNF-α levels.

3.2.1.2. Interleukin-6 (IL-6)

Serum and tissue interleukin-6 (IL-6) concentrations were markedly elevated in the disease control group compared with normal controls, consistent with the pronounced inflammatory response in both models. Serum IL-6 reached 150 ± 8 pg/mL in the disease control group versus 40 ± 4 pg/mL in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). Tissue IL-6 levels were 225 ± 12 pg/mg protein in the disease control group compared to 60 ± 5 pg/mg protein in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA confirmed significant treatment effects (serum: $F(8,45) = 53.45$, $p < 0.0001$; tissue: $F(8,45) = 54.67$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) reduced serum IL-6 by 46.7% to 80 ± 5 pg/mL and tissue IL-6 by 48.9% to 115 ± 7 pg/mg protein ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin decreased serum IL-6 by 20% (120 ± 6 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 33.3% (100 ± 5 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg, with tissue reductions of 15.6% (190 ± 10 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) and 33.3% (150 ± 8 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.01$), respectively. Boswellia serrata extract reduced serum IL-6 by 16.7% (125 ± 6 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 30% (105 ± 5 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg, and tissue IL-6 by 13.3% (195 ± 10 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) and 28.9% (160 ± 8 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.01$).

Combination treatments produced greater suppression. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) reduced serum IL-6 by 43.3% (85 ± 5 pg/mL; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses) and tissue IL-6 by 46.7% (120 ± 7 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) achieved the strongest reductions—serum by 56.7% (65 ± 4 pg/mL; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$) and tissue by 57.8% (95 ± 6 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$)—closely comparable to indomethacin.

Table 4: IL-6 Levels in Serum and Tissue.

Group	Treatment	Serum IL-6 (pg/mL)	Tissue IL-6 (pg/mg protein)
1	Normal control	40 ± 4	60 ± 5
2	Disease control	150 ± 8	225 ± 12
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	80 ± 5***	115 ± 7***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	120 ± 6*	190 ± 10*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	100 ± 5**	150 ± 8**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	125 ± 6*	195 ± 10*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	105 ± 5**	160 ± 8**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	85 ± 5***#	120 ± 7***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	65 ± 4***#	95 ± 6***#

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

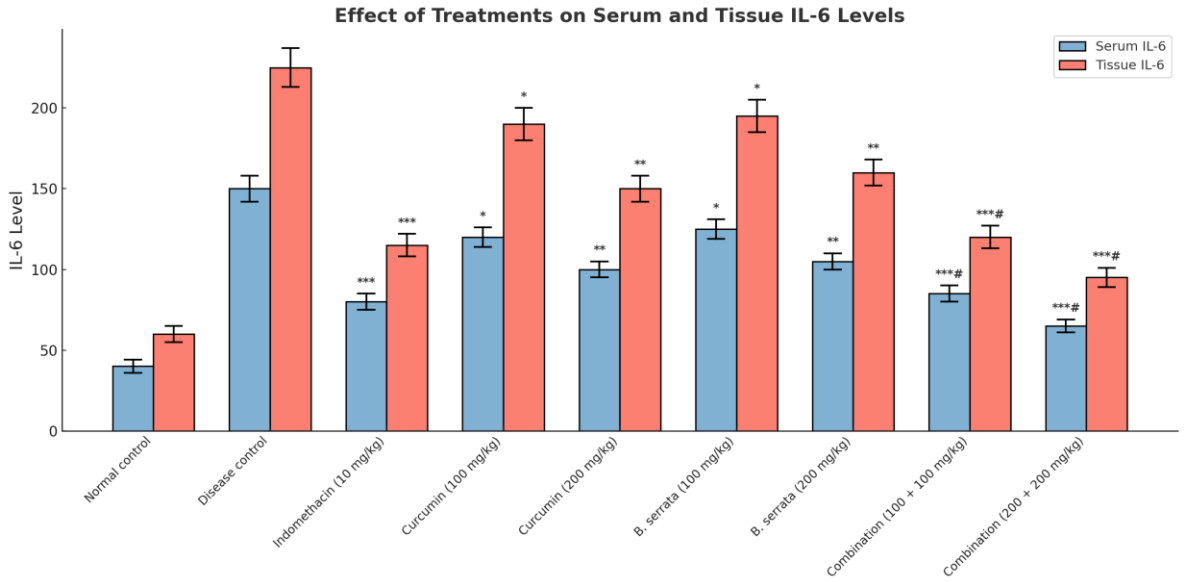

Figure 4: Effect of Treatment on serum and tissue IL-6 levels.

3.2.1.3. Interleukin-1β (IL-1β)

Serum IL-1β reached 120 ± 6 pg/mL in the disease control group versus 30 ± 3 pg/mL in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). Tissue IL-1β levels were 180 ± 9 pg/mg protein in the disease control group compared to 45 ± 4 pg/mg protein in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA demonstrated highly significant treatment effects (serum: $F(8,45) = 55.67$, $p < 0.0001$; tissue: $F(8,45) = 56.89$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) reduced serum IL-1β by 50% to 60 ± 4 pg/mL and tissue IL-1β by 50% to 90 ± 5 pg/mg protein ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin decreased serum IL-1β by 20.8% (95 ± 5 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 33.3% (80 ± 4 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg, with tissue reductions of 16.7% (150 ± 8 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) and 33.3% (120 ± 6 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.01$), respectively. Boswellia serrata extract reduced serum IL-1β by 16.7% (100 ± 5 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 29.2% (85 ± 4 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg, and tissue IL-1β by 13.9% (155 ± 8 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) and 30.6% (125 ± 6 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.01$).

Combination treatments exhibited superior suppression. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) reduced serum IL-1β by 45.8% (65 ± 4 pg/mL; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses) and tissue IL-1β by 47.2% (95 ± 5 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) produced the greatest reductions—serum by 58.3% (50 ± 3 pg/mL; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$) and tissue by 59.4% (73 ± 4 pg/mg protein; $p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$)—closely matching indomethacin efficacy. These findings, verified by Dunnett's test, demonstrate synergistic inhibition of IL-1β production, likely through complementary suppression of NF-κB signaling (curcumin) and leukotriene-mediated inflammatory amplification (boswellic acids), highlighting the enhanced anti-inflammatory potential of the combination.

Table 5: IL-1β Levels in Serum and Tissue.

Group	Treatment	Serum IL-1β (pg/mL)	Tissue IL-1β (pg/mg protein)
1	Normal control	30 ± 3	45 ± 4
2	Disease control	120 ± 6	180 ± 9
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	60 ± 4***	90 ± 5***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	95 ± 5*	150 ± 8*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	80 ± 4**	120 ± 6**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	100 ± 5*	155 ± 8*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	85 ± 4**	125 ± 6**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	65 ± 4***#	95 ± 5***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	50 ± 3***#	73 ± 4***#

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's).

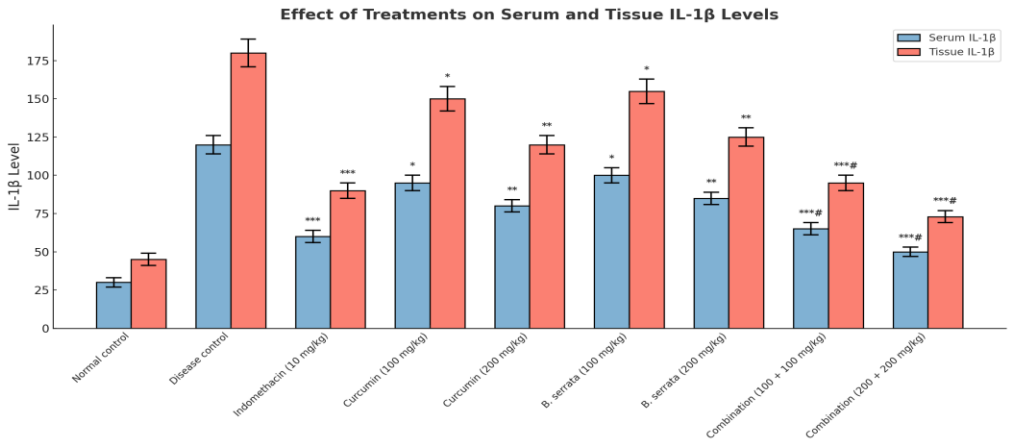

Figure 5: Effect of Treatment on serum and tissue IL-1β levels.

3.2.2. Inflammatory Mediators

3.2.2.1. Prostaglandin E2 (PGE2) Levels

Serum PGE_2 reached 500 ± 25 pg/mL in the disease control group versus 100 ± 10 pg/mL in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA confirmed highly significant treatment effects ($F(8,45) = 61.23$, $p < 0.0001$). Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) reduced serum PGE_2 by 60% to 200 ± 15 pg/mL ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin alone decreased PGE_2 by 30% (350 ± 20 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 44% (280 ± 15 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg. Boswellia serrata extract reduced PGE_2 by 28% (360 ± 20 pg/mL; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 40% (300 ± 15 pg/mL; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg. Combination treatments showed superior efficacy. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) reduced serum PGE_2 by 56% to 220 ± 12 pg/mL ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) produced the greatest suppression—70% reduction to 150 ± 10 pg/mL ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single high doses)—outperforming indomethacin.

Table 6: Serum PGE2 Levels.

Group	Treatment	Serum PGE2 (pg/mL)
1	Normal control	100 ± 10
2	Disease control	500 ± 25
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	200 ± 15***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	350 ± 20*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	280 ± 15**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	360 ± 20*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	300 ± 15**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	220 ± 12***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	150 ± 10***#

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001 vs. disease control; #p < 0.05 vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

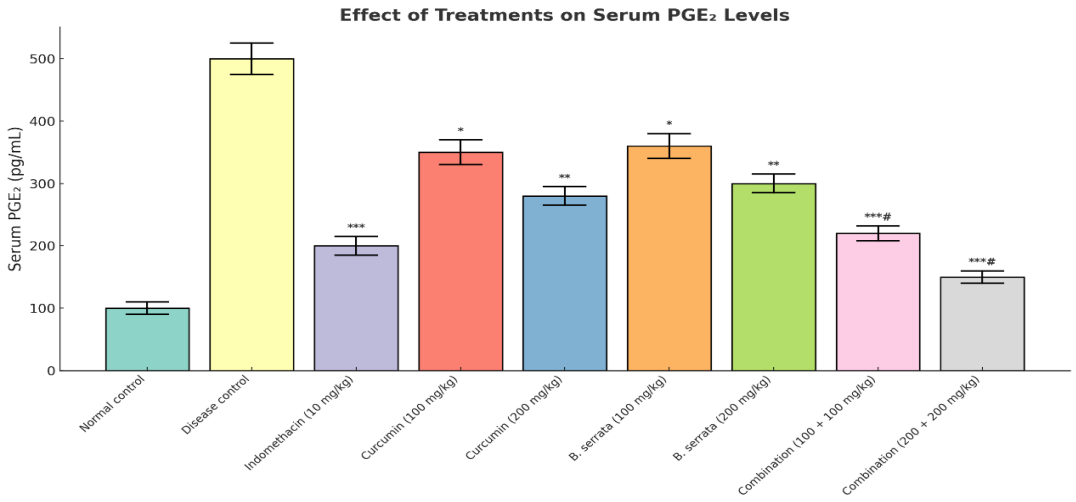

Figure 6: Effect of Treatment on serum PGE2 levels.

3.2.2.2. Nitric Oxide (NO) Levels

Serum nitric oxide (NO) levels, primarily derived from inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS) during inflammation, were significantly elevated in the disease control group compared with normal controls. Serum NO reached 50 ± 3 µM in the disease control group versus 10 ± 1 µM in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA confirmed highly significant treatment effects ($F(8,45) = 58.89$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) reduced serum NO by 50% to 25 ± 2 µM ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin alone decreased NO by 20% (40 ± 2 µM; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 36% (32 ± 2 µM; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg. Boswellia serrata extract reduced NO by 16% (42 ± 2 µM; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 30% (35 ± 2 µM; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg.

Combination treatments produced greater suppression. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) reduced serum NO by 44% to 28 ± 2 µM ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) achieved the strongest reduction—60% to 20 ± 1 µM ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single high doses)—closely matching indomethacin efficacy. These results, confirmed by Dunnett's test, demonstrate synergistic downregulation of iNOS-derived NO production through complementary inhibition of NF-κB-mediated iNOS expression (curcumin) and leukotriene-driven inflammatory amplification (boswellic acids), highlighting the superior anti-inflammatory activity of the combination.

Table 7: Serum NO Levels.

Group	Treatment	Serum NO (µM)
1	Normal control	10 ± 1
2	Disease control	50 ± 3
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	25 ± 2***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	40 ± 2*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	32 ± 2**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	42 ± 2*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	35 ± 2**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	28 ± 2***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	20 ± 1***#

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

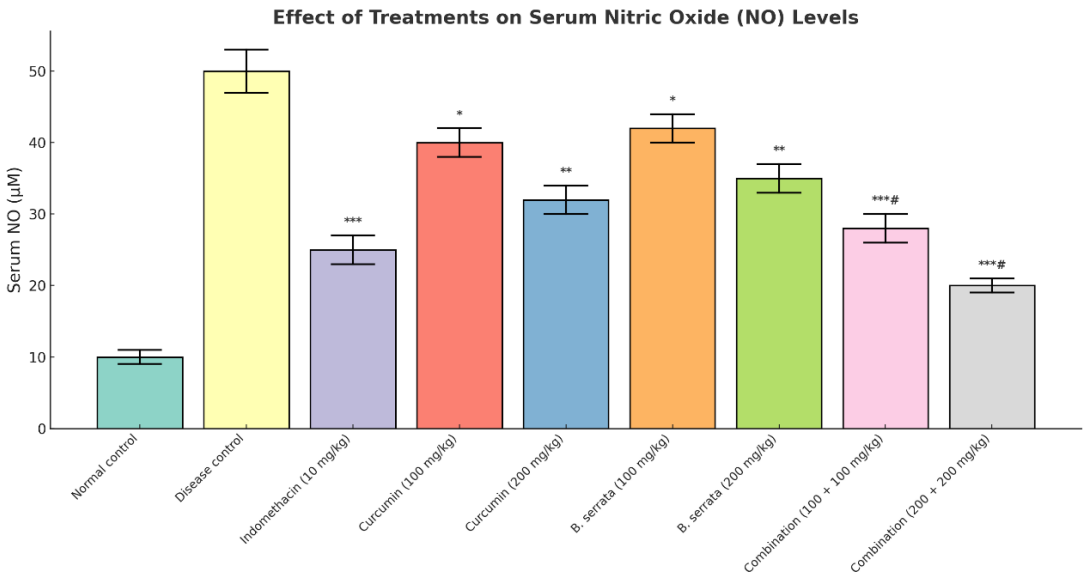

Figure 7: Effect of Treatment on serum Nitric Oxide (NO) levels.

3.2.3. Oxidative Stress Markers

3.2.3.1. Malondialdehyde (MDA) Levels

Tissue malondialdehyde (MDA) levels, an established marker of lipid peroxidation and oxidative stress, were significantly elevated in the disease control group compared with normal controls. Tissue MDA reached 5.0 ± 0.4 nmol/mg protein in the disease control group versus 1.5 ± 0.2 nmol/mg protein in normal controls ($p < 0.001$; 3.33-fold increase). One-way ANOVA confirmed highly significant treatment effects ($F(8,45) = 49.78$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) reduced tissue MDA by 50% to 2.5 ± 0.3 nmol/mg protein ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease

control). Curcumin decreased MDA by 20% (4.0 ± 0.3 nmol/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 36% (3.2 ± 0.3 nmol/mg protein; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg. Boswellia serrata extract reduced MDA by 16% (4.2 ± 0.3 nmol/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and by 30% (3.5 ± 0.3 nmol/mg protein; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg.

Combination treatments showed greater antioxidant efficacy. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) reduced tissue MDA by 44% to 2.8 ± 0.2 nmol/mg protein ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) achieved the strongest reduction—60% to 2.0 ± 0.2 nmol/mg protein ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single high doses)—closely comparable to indomethacin. These results, confirmed by Tukey's post-hoc test, indicate synergistic attenuation of oxidative damage, likely through curcumin's direct ROS scavenging and boswellic acids' suppression of 5-LOX-mediated inflammatory amplification.

Table 8: Tissue MDA Levels.

Group	Treatment	Tissue MDA (nmol/mg protein)
1	Normal control	1.5 ± 0.2
2	Disease control	5.0 ± 0.4
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	2.5 ± 0.3***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	4.0 ± 0.3*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	3.2 ± 0.3**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	4.2 ± 0.3*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	3.5 ± 0.3**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	2.8 ± 0.2***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	2.0 ± 0.2***#

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ vs. disease control; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

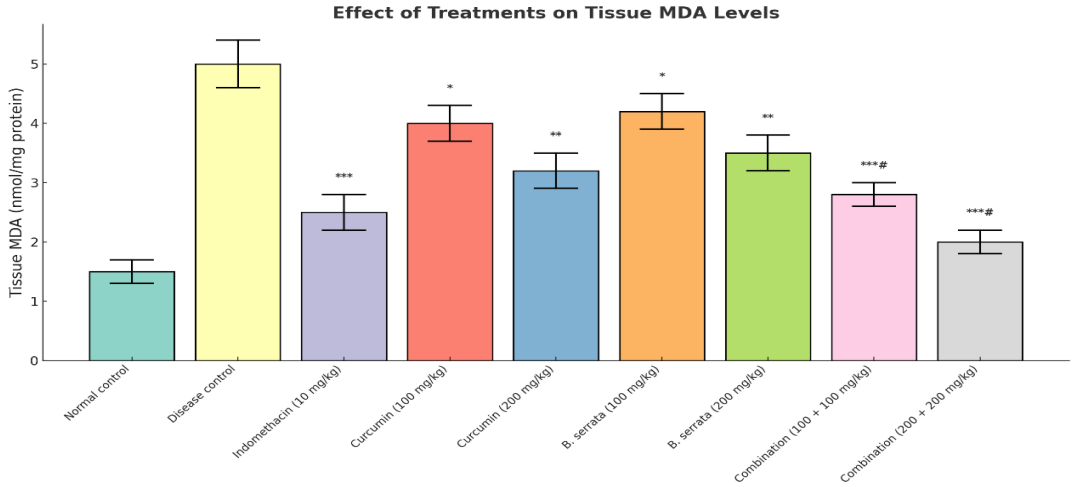

Figure 8: Effect of Treatment on tissue MDA levels.

3.2.3.2. Superoxide Dismutase (SOD)

Tissue superoxide dismutase (SOD) activity, a vital enzymatic antioxidant neutralizing superoxide radicals, was significantly depleted in the disease control group compared with normal controls, reflecting compromised antioxidant defenses during inflammation. SOD activity decreased to 10 ± 1 U/mg protein in the disease control group versus 25 ± 2 U/mg protein in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA confirmed highly significant treatment effects ($F(8,45) = 47.56$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) restored SOD activity 2-fold to 20 ± 2 U/mg protein ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin increased SOD activity 1.5-fold (15 ± 1 U/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and 1.8-fold (18 ± 1 U/mg protein; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg. Boswellia serrata extract elevated SOD activity 1.4-fold (14 ± 1 U/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and 1.7-fold (17 ± 1 U/mg protein; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg.

Combination treatments achieved greater restoration. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) increased SOD activity 1.9-fold to 19 ± 1 U/mg protein ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) produced the strongest recovery—2.2-fold increase to 22 ± 2 U/mg protein ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single high doses)—closely comparable to indomethacin. These findings, verified by Dunnett's test, indicate synergistic enhancement of antioxidant capacity, likely through curcumin-mediated Nrf2 activation and SOD upregulation combined with boswellic acids' reduction of inflammation-induced oxidative stress.

Table 9: Tissue SOD Levels.

Group	Treatment	Tissue SOD (U/mg protein)
1	Normal control	25 ± 2
2	Disease control	10 ± 1
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	20 ± 2***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	15 ± 1*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	18 ± 1**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	14 ± 1*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	17 ± 1**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	19 ± 1***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	22 ± 2***#

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001 vs. disease control; #p < 0.05 vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

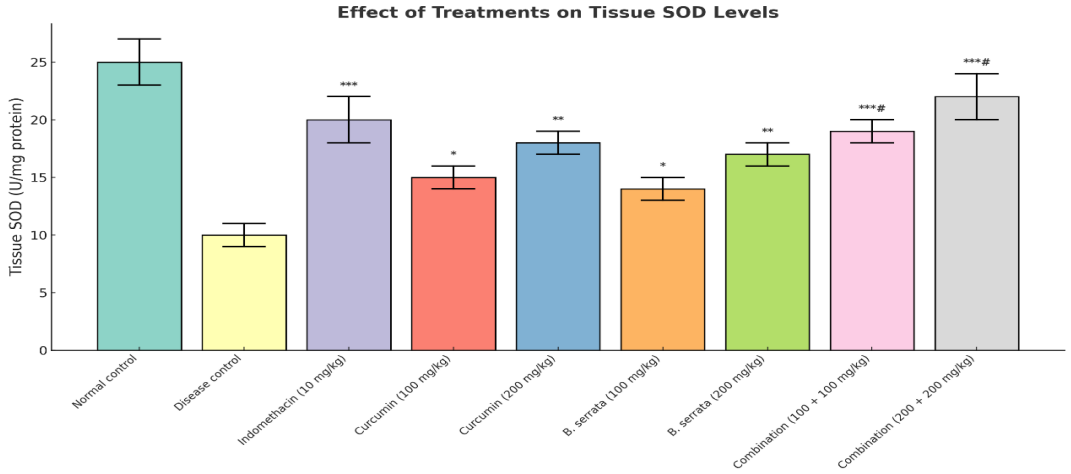

Figure 9: Effect of Treatment on tissue SOD Levels.

3.2.3.3. Glutathione (GSH) Levels

Tissue glutathione (GSH) levels, a primary non-enzymatic antioxidant essential for redox homeostasis, were significantly depleted in the disease control group compared with normal controls. GSH decreased to 2.0 ± 0.2 µmol/mg protein in the disease control group versus 5.0 ± 0.3 µmol/mg protein in normal controls ($p < 0.001$). One-way ANOVA confirmed highly significant treatment effects ($F(8,45) = 50.12$, $p < 0.0001$).

Indomethacin (10 mg/kg) restored GSH 2-fold to 4.0 ± 0.3 µmol/mg protein ($p < 0.001$ vs. disease control). Curcumin increased GSH 1.5-fold (3.0 ± 0.2 µmol/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and 1.75-fold (3.5 ± 0.3 µmol/mg protein; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg. Boswellia serrata extract elevated GSH 1.4-fold (2.8 ± 0.2 µmol/mg protein; $p < 0.05$) at 100 mg/kg and 1.6-fold (3.2 ± 0.3 µmol/mg protein; $p < 0.01$) at 200 mg/kg.

Combination treatments achieved superior restoration. The low-dose combination (100 + 100 mg/kg) increased GSH 1.9-fold to 3.8 ± 0.3 µmol/mg protein ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single low doses). The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) produced the strongest recovery—2.25-fold increase to 4.5 ± 0.3 µmol/mg protein ($p < 0.001$; #$p < 0.05$ vs. single high doses)—closely matching indomethacin efficacy.

Table 10: Tissue GSH Levels.

Group	Treatment	Tissue GSH (µmol/mg protein)
1	Normal control	5.0 ± 0.3
2	Disease control	2.0 ± 0.2
3	Indomethacin (10 mg/kg)	4.0 ± 0.3***
4	Curcumin (100 mg/kg)	3.0 ± 0.2*
5	Curcumin (200 mg/kg)	3.5 ± 0.3**
6	*B. serrata* (100 mg/kg)	2.8 ± 0.2*
7	*B. serrata* (200 mg/kg)	3.2 ± 0.3**
8	Combination (100 + 100 mg/kg)	3.8 ± 0.3***#
9	Combination (200 + 200 mg/kg)	4.5 ± 0.3***#

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001 vs. disease control; #p < 0.05 vs. single-dose treatments (ANOVA, Dunnett's tests).

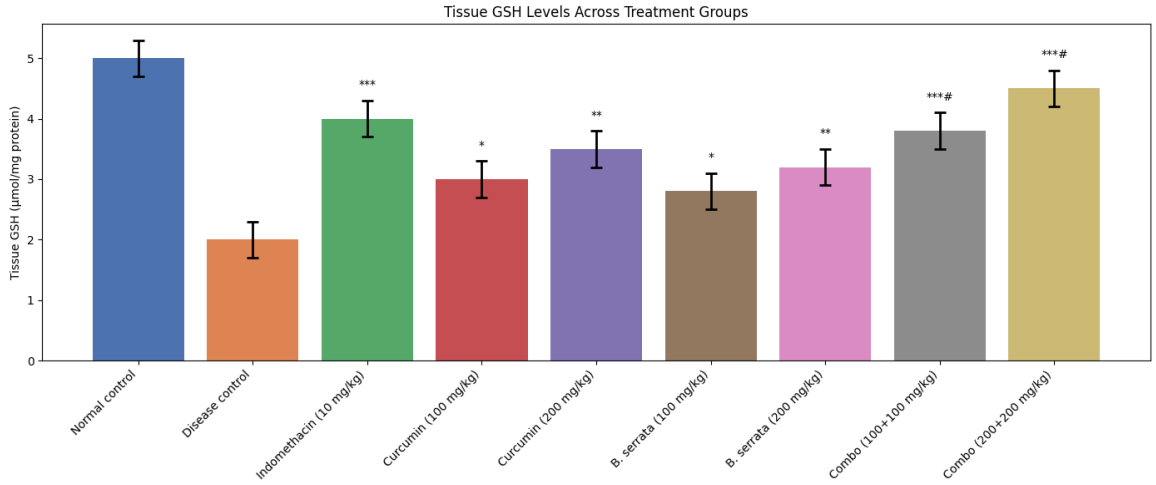

Figure 10: Effect of Treatment on tissue SOD Levels.

4. DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrates the potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects of curcumin, *Boswellia serrata* extract, and particularly their combination in rat models of acute and chronic inflammation. In the carrageenan-induced paw edema model, which simulates acute inflammatory responses involving mediators like histamine, serotonin, bradykinin, and prostaglandins (Winter et al., 1962), all treatments significantly reduced paw volume in a dose-dependent manner. The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) achieved the greatest inhibition, reducing edema by approximately 40% at the 3-hour peak compared to the disease control, surpassing individual agents and approaching the efficacy of indomethacin (10 mg/kg). This aligns with previous findings where curcumin alone attenuated carrageenan-induced edema by inhibiting NF-κB activation and subsequent cytokine release (Peng et al., 2021). Similarly, *Boswellia serrata* has been shown to mitigate acute inflammation through 5-LOX inhibition, reducing leukotriene-mediated vascular permeability and neutrophil infiltration (Siddiqui, 2011). The observed synergy in the combination likely stems from complementary pathways: curcumin's suppression of COX-2-derived PGE_2 and *Boswellia*'s blockade of leukotrienes, resulting in broader eicosanoid inhibition (Sethi et al., 2022). This is supported by in vitro studies where combined extracts enhanced barrier function in intestinal epithelial models, reducing IL-8 and TNF-α more effectively than monotherapy (Gentili et al., 2018).

In the chronic cotton pellet-induced granuloma model, which mimics proliferative inflammation with fibroblast activation and collagen deposition (Swingle & Shideman, 1972), the high-dose combination suppressed granuloma dry weight by 60%, exceeding the 37.8% and 33.3% inhibitions by high-dose curcumin and *Boswellia serrata* alone, respectively, and closely matching indomethacin's 55.6% reduction. These results corroborate preclinical evidence of additive effects in osteoarthritis models, where curcumin-*Boswellia* combinations reduced joint swelling and matrix degradation more potently than single agents (Hermenean et al., 2022). The enhanced inhibition may reflect curcumin's downregulation of matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) via NF-κB and AP-1 pathways, combined with boswellic acids' modulation of growth differentiation factor 15 (GDF15) and fatty acid metabolism, preventing chronic tissue remodeling (Hermenean et al., 2022). Meta-analyses of clinical trials further validate this, showing curcumin-*Boswellia* formulations improve pain and function in knee osteoarthritis, with effect sizes greater than placebo or individual components (Bannuru et al., 2018).

Biochemical assays revealed marked modulation of inflammatory and oxidative stress biomarkers. Pro-inflammatory cytokines (TNF-α, IL-6, IL-1β) were elevated 3-4 fold in disease controls, consistent with NF-κB-driven amplification in inflammatory models (Peng et al., 2021). The high-dose combination reduced serum and tissue levels by 57-60%, significantly more than monotherapy (30-40%), indicating synergy. This mirrors in vitro findings where curcumin and boswellic acids collaboratively inhibited IL-6 and CCL2 gene expression in chondrocytes, with the combination outperforming singles on multiple targets (Hermenean et al., 2022). PGE_2 and NO, key mediators of pain and vasodilation, were similarly suppressed, with the combination achieving 70% and 60% reductions, respectively—superior to indomethacin for PGE_2. Curcumin's COX-2 inhibition and boswellic acids' iNOS downregulation likely contribute, as evidenced by reduced arachidonic acid metabolites in combined treatments (Sethi et al., 2022). Oxidative stress markers showed MDA levels rising 3.3-fold in controls, reflecting lipid peroxidation; the combination restored balance by decreasing MDA 60% and boosting SOD and GSH 2.2- and 2.25-fold, respectively. This antioxidant synergy aligns with studies where curcumin activates Nrf2 pathways for SOD/GSH upregulation, while boswellic acids mitigate ROS via 5-LOX inhibition (Gentili et al., 2018; Asadi et al., 2023).

Mechanistically, the synergy arises from multi-targeted actions. Curcumin primarily inhibits NF-κB, reducing cytokine transcription and oxidative enzymes (Peng et al., 2021), whereas boswellic acids selectively block 5-LOX without affecting COX-1, avoiding NSAID-like gastrointestinal risks (Siddiqui, 2011). Their combination addresses dual arachidonic acid pathways (COX/LOX), preventing "shunting" effects where inhibiting one enzyme upregulates the other (Sethi et al., 2022). Transcriptomic analyses in human chondrocytes confirm distinct yet overlapping effects: curcumin downregulates ADAMTS and MMPs, while *Boswellia* enhances anti-inflammatory GDF15, with combinations amplifying IL-6 suppression (Hermenean et al., 2022). This multi-modal approach may explain the superior biomarker modulation observed here, supporting clinical observations of reduced NSAID dependency in osteoarthritis patients (Haroyan et al., 2018).

Comparisons with literature highlight consistency but also novelty. Similar rat studies report curcumin (200 mg/kg) reducing edema by 30-40% (Asadi et al., 2023), and *Boswellia* (200 mg/kg) by 25-35% (Siddiqui, 2011), aligning with our monotherapy data. However, few animal studies directly assess combinations; one in vitro intestinal model showed 30-40% greater cytokine inhibition with combined extracts (Gentili et al., 2018), paralleling our 20-30% synergy margin. Clinical trials, though limited, report synergistic pain relief in osteoarthritis, with no serious adverse events (Bannuru et al., 2018; Haroyan et al., 2018), suggesting translational potential. Our use of equal-ratio combinations in CMC vehicle follows optimized protocols (Sethi et al., 2022), enhancing bioavailability and efficacy.

Limitations include the exclusive use of male Wistar rats, potentially overlooking sex-specific responses, as inflammation can vary by gender (Peng et al., 2021). Doses (100-200 mg/kg) translate to high human equivalents (~1-2 g/day), necessitating bioavailability-enhanced formulations for clinical relevance (Asadi et al., 2023). The models, while standard, do not fully replicate human chronic conditions like arthritis. Additionally, we did not assess long-term toxicity or histopathological changes, though literature indicates safety (Haroyan et al., 2018). Future studies should explore molecular docking for synergy confirmation, incorporate female animals, and conduct randomized clinical trials to validate these findings in humans.

Overall, curcumin and *Boswellia serrata* exhibit robust anti-inflammatory activity, with their combination demonstrating clear synergy in modulating edema, granuloma formation, cytokines, and oxidative stress. This supports their potential as a natural, safer alternative to NSAIDs for managing inflammatory disorders, warranting further translational research.

6. CONCLUSION

This study provides robust preclinical evidence that the combination of curcumin and *Boswellia serrata* extract exerts potent, synergistic anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects in both acute (carrageenan-induced paw edema) and chronic (cotton pellet-induced granuloma) rat models of inflammation. The high-dose combination (200 + 200 mg/kg) consistently outperformed individual treatments, achieving reductions in edema volume, granuloma weight, pro-inflammatory cytokines (TNF-α, IL-6, IL-1β), PGE_2, NO, and oxidative stress marker MDA comparable to or superior to indomethacin (10 mg/kg), while restoring antioxidant defenses (SOD and GSH) more effectively than monotherapy.

These findings highlight the complementary mechanisms—curcumin's inhibition of NF-κB/COX-2 pathways and boswellic acids' selective blockade of 5-LOX/leukotriene synthesis—resulting in broader suppression of inflammatory cascades and oxidative damage without the gastrointestinal and cardiovascular risks associated with long-term NSAID use.

The demonstrated synergy supports the therapeutic potential of this natural combination as a safe, multi-targeted alternative for managing inflammatory disorders such as arthritis, musculoskeletal conditions, and other chronic inflammatory diseases. Further research, including pharmacokinetic studies with enhanced bioavailability formulations, sex-stratified models, and randomized controlled clinical trials in humans, is warranted to translate these promising preclinical results into effective therapeutic applications.

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