



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY  
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC)

## Herbal medicine: summary for the public

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### Chicory root

*Cichorium intybus* L., radix

This is a summary of the scientific conclusions reached by the Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC) on the medicinal uses of chicory root. The HMPC conclusions are taken into account by EU Member States when evaluating applications for the licensing of herbal medicines containing chicory root.

This summary is not intended to provide practical advice on how to use medicines containing chicory root. For practical information about using chicory root medicines, patients should read the package leaflet that comes with the medicine or contact their doctor or pharmacist.

#### **What is chicory root?**

Chicory root is the common name for the root of the plant *Cichorium intybus* L. The plant is cultivated or gathered to obtain the root for medicinal use.

Chicory root preparations are obtained by comminuting the roots (reducing them into tiny pieces).

Herbal medicines containing chicory root are usually available as herbal tea to be drunk.

Chicory root can also be found in combination with other herbal substances in some herbal medicines. These combinations are not covered in this summary.

#### **What are the HMPC conclusions on its medicinal uses?**

The HMPC concluded that, on the basis of its long-standing use, chicory root can be used for the relief of symptoms of mild digestive disorders (such as feeling full, flatulence and slow digestion) and temporary loss of appetite.

Chicory root should only be used in adults and children over the age of 12 years. A doctor should be consulted if the symptoms persist following 2 weeks of treatment. Detailed instruction on how to take



chicory root medicines and who can use them can be found in the package leaflet that comes with the medicine.

### **What evidence supports the use of chicory root medicines?**

The HMPC conclusions on the use of chicory root medicines for the relief of symptoms of mild digestive disorders and temporary loss of appetite are based on their 'traditional use'. This means that, although there is insufficient evidence from clinical trials, the effectiveness of these herbal medicines is plausible and there is evidence that they have been used safely in this way for at least 30 years (including at least 15 years within the EU). Moreover, the intended use does not require medical supervision.

In its assessment, the HMPC took into account the well documented use of chicory root in digestive disorders and loss of appetite. In addition, the HMPC considered that chicory root contains bitter substances that may stimulate appetite and also a study in the laboratory, which showed an effect of chicory root in stimulating an increased secretion of bile (a fluid produced in the liver that helps to break down fats), thereby supporting its use in digestive disorders.

For detailed information on the studies assessed by the HMPC, see the HMPC assessment report.

### **What are the risks associated with chicory root medicines?**

At the time of the HMPC assessment, no side effects had been reported with these medicines.

Further information on the risks associated with chicory root medicines, including the appropriate precautions for their safe use, can be found in the monograph under the tab 'All documents' on the Agency's website: [ema.europa.eu/Find\\_medicine/Herbal\\_medicines\\_for\\_human\\_use](http://ema.europa.eu/Find_medicine/Herbal_medicines_for_human_use).

### **How are chicory root medicines approved in the EU?**

Any applications for the licensing of medicines containing chicory root have to be submitted to the national authorities responsible for medicinal products, which will assess the application for the herbal medicine and take into account the scientific conclusions of the HMPC.

Information on the use and licensing of chicory root medicines in EU Member States should be obtained from the relevant national authorities.

### **Other information about chicory root medicines**

Further information on the HMPC assessment of chicory root medicines, including details of the Committee's conclusions, can be found under the tab 'All documents' on the Agency's website: [ema.europa.eu/Find\\_medicine/Herbal\\_medicines\\_for\\_human\\_use](http://ema.europa.eu/Find_medicine/Herbal_medicines_for_human_use). For more information about treatment with chicory root medicines, read the package leaflet that comes with the medicine or contact your doctor or pharmacist.