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## Feverfew herb

*Tanacetum parthenium* (L.) Schultz Bip., herba

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

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

### What is feverfew herb?

Feverfew herb is the common name for the above-ground parts of the plant *Tanacetum parthenium* (L.) Schultz Bip.

The HMPC conclusions only cover feverfew herb preparations that are obtained by drying and powdering the above-ground parts of the plant.

Herbal medicines containing these feverfew herb preparations are usually available in solid forms to be taken by mouth.

Feverfew herb preparations may 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 their long-standing use, these feverfew herb preparations can be used for the prevention of migraine, after serious conditions have been excluded by a doctor.

Feverfew herb medicines should only be used in adults and usually need to be taken for 2 months to have an effect. If migraines recur after this period or symptoms worsen during treatment, a doctor or a qualified health care practitioner should be consulted.

Detailed instructions on how to take feverfew herb medicines and who can use them can be found in the package leaflet that comes with the medicine.



## **What evidence supports the use of feverfew herb medicines?**

The HMPC conclusions on the use of these feverfew herb medicines for the prevention of migraine are based on their 'traditional use' in this condition. 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 in the EU). Moreover, the intended use does not require medical supervision.

In its assessment, the HMPC also considered clinical studies comparing feverfew herb with placebo for the prevention of migraine. However, due to shortcomings in the studies (including small numbers of patients), firm conclusions could not be drawn. Therefore, the HMPC conclusions on the use of these feverfew herb medicines are based on their long-standing use.

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

## **What are the risks associated with feverfew herb medicines?**

Digestive system problems have been reported with the use of feverfew herb medicines. Their frequency has not been established.

Feverfew herb medicines must not be used in patients who are hypersensitive (allergic) to feverfew or other plants of the *Asteraceae* (*Compositae*) family.

Further information on the risks associated with these feverfew medicines, including the appropriate precautions for their safe use, can be found in the monograph which is published on the Agency's website under the section 'Documents': [ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/tanaceti-parthenii-herba](http://ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/tanaceti-parthenii-herba).

## **How are feverfew herb medicines approved in the EU?**

Any applications for the licensing of medicines containing feverfew 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 feverfew medicines in EU Member States should be obtained from the relevant national authorities.

## **Other information about feverfew herb medicines**

Further information on the HMPC assessment of feverfew medicines, including details of the Committee's conclusions, can be found in the section 'Documents' on the Agency's website: [ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/tanaceti-parthenii-herba](http://ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/tanaceti-parthenii-herba).

For more information about treatment with feverfew herb medicines, read the package leaflet that comes with the medicine or contact your doctor or pharmacist.