



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY  
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC)

## Turmeric

*Curcuma longa* L. (*C. domestica* Valetton), rhizoma

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

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

### What is turmeric?

Turmeric is the common name for the below-ground stem of the plant *Curcuma longa* L. (*C. domestica* Valetton).

The HMPC conclusions only cover turmeric preparations that are obtained by drying and powdering or comminuting (reducing into tiny pieces) the stem or by putting the plant material in a solvent (such as ethanol) to dissolve compounds and form a liquid extract. The solvent may then be evaporated to obtain a dry extract.

Herbal medicines containing these turmeric preparations are usually available as herbal tea to be drunk and in solid or liquid forms to be taken by mouth.

Turmeric 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 turmeric preparations can be used for relief of mild problems with digestion, such as feelings of fullness, slow digestion and flatulence.

Turmeric medicines should only be used in adults. If symptoms continue longer than two weeks or worsen while taking the medicine, a doctor or qualified healthcare practitioner should be consulted. Detailed instructions on how to take turmeric medicines and who can use them can be found in the package leaflet that comes with the medicine.



## **What evidence supports the use of turmeric medicines?**

The HMPC conclusions on the use of these turmeric medicines for relief of mild digestive problems 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 also considered several clinical studies with turmeric preparations involving patients with digestive disorders. Although a possible effect in improving symptoms was seen, firm conclusions could not be drawn since there were shortcomings in the study design and only one study compared turmeric with a control group. Therefore, the HMPC conclusions on the use of these turmeric 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 turmeric medicines?**

Dry mouth, flatulence and stomach irritation may occur as side effects. The frequency is unknown.

Further information on the risks associated with these turmeric 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/medicines/herbal/curcumae-longae-rhizoma](http://ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/curcumae-longae-rhizoma).

## **How are turmeric medicines approved in the EU?**

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

## **Other information about turmeric medicines**

Further information on the HMPC assessment of turmeric medicines, including details of the Committee's conclusions, can be found under the tab 'All documents' on the Agency's website: [ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/curcumae-longae-rhizoma](http://ema.europa.eu/medicines/herbal/curcumae-longae-rhizoma). For more information about treatment with turmeric medicines, read the package leaflet that comes with the medicine or contact your doctor or pharmacist.