

Turmeric – yellow root with healing power



In well-stocked supermarkets, you may have noticed those small yellow tubers, usually next to the larger ginger roots. Actually, they are close to each other not only in the fruit and vegetable section, but also botanically. Turmeric and ginger are relatives and have a somewhat similar appearance. The tubers of both plants can be used fresh or dried.

Ground turmeric is the ingredient that gives curry its typical yellow color and slightly bitter taste. In India, turmeric is cultivated on a large scale, as it is one of the most important spices for enhancing the digestibility of food. Almost the entire world demand is supplied from there, and yet almost 80% is consumed in India itself.

While turmeric, in all its forms, is consumed daily in India, it also plays a very important role in traditional medicine in Indonesia. Jamu, for example, is a kind of juice that people take daily as a preventive measure. It consists of water, ginger, turmeric, and various other ingredients, and is officially recognized by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture as part of Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage.

Turmeric, the miracle root

Turmeric has the taste qualities: bitter, pungent, and astringent. These three Rasas help reduce Kapha and Ama. Due to its pungency, turmeric is warming and soothes aggravated Vata. Turmeric, or Haridra as it is called in Sanskrit, has a very positive effect on the nervous system, as well as in the gastrointes-

tinal tract. It strengthens digestion by increasing bile flow and improves intestinal flora. Especially people who have difficulty digesting fat can experience significant relief through the daily consumption of turmeric – in combination with an adapted diet.

Due to its anti-inflammatory properties, preparations of turmeric can be used for inflammation of the intestines, uterus, eyes and ears, and the respiratory tract. The expectorant effect particularly supports the healing of all forms of colds, bronchitis and sinusitis. In addition, turmeric has an anti-allergic, antiseptic and hemostatic effect, so that the turmeric can be a helpful companion for eczema, shingles, hives, itching and cuts.

The analgesic and detumescent component of turmeric can be very helpful in the treatment of arthritis. In recent studies, its effectiveness was found to be comparable to modern painkillers and anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen or diclofenac.

Turmeric contains about 5% essential oils and has a notable antiseptic and antibacterial effect. Besides the essential oils, it also contains curcuminoids, which give the root its yellow color. Turmeric is among the most powerful antioxidants and is known to slow down aging processes. In various studies on humans and animals, a significant improvement in memory performance has been demonstrated. It has also been found that turmeric exerts an inhibitory influence on all signaling pathways in degenerated cancer cells. Therefore, turmeric is increasingly used in the preventive, as well as in the active treatment of cancer.



Turmeric – yellow root with healing power

All these effects have been known in Ayurveda for thousands of years. In recent decades, modern medicine has become increasingly interested in ancient medicinal plants and has included turmeric in its list of internationally recognized medicinal plants.

Overview of the effects of turmeric:

- **Has an anti-inflammatory property**
- **Fights free radicals, bacteria, viruses and parasites**
- **Helps against nausea and relieves stomach pain**
- **Has a fungicidal effect, e.g. on Candida albicans**
- **Protects against type-2 diabetes**
- **Protects the liver and supports its function**
- **Improves the production of bile acids**
- **Has a blood purifying effect and helps to reduce cholesterol levels**
- **Reduces allergies and hay fever**
- **Alleviates cystitis and irritable bladder**
- **Promotes detoxification of toxic and carcinogenic substances**
- **Inhibits the growth of tumors**

Using and dosing turmeric appropriately

The usual daily intake is 1–3 grams two to three times a day. Since turmeric has poor bioavailability, is poorly soluble in water, and is poorly absorbed through the intestines, the recommendation is to combine it with Pippali, ginger, Amalaki, or Haritaki, to increase absorption. Newer formulations use liposomal binding via micelles, which can increase bioavailability over 100-fold and maintain blood plasma levels fairly consistently over 24 hours. Turmeric should not be taken in high doses when there is acute inflammation of the bile ducts due to small gallstones. Self-medication is not advised here – it should only be taken in consultation

with a physician. As a spice in the kitchen, on the other hand, there are no special precautions to be observed, as it has a balancing effect on all three Doshas.



Ayurvedic home remedies

- **For common cold:**
3 pinches of turmeric powder
1 pinch of black pepper
3 pinches of rock salt
3 pinches of freshly grated ginger
Stir all ingredients in a cup of boiled hot water and drink it. Do this every one to two hours.
- **If you have a sore throat:**
Simmer half a teaspoon of turmeric powder in 150 ml of milk for 10 minutes on low heat, drain and drink warm.
- **For urinary tract infections:**
Scald 1 teaspoon of turmeric powder or sliced fresh turmeric root with a cup of boiled hot water. Drink one cup several times a day.
- **To stimulate digestion:**
Steep freshly cut turmeric root in a cup of hot water for 5 minutes (covered), strain, and drink before meals.
- **For hives:**
Make a paste of yogurt and turmeric powder and apply it to the affected areas of the skin several times a day.



Turmeric – yellow root with healing power

- **For shingles:**
Once a day, spread mustard oil on the affected areas of the skin and sprinkle turmeric powder on it, leave it on for 20-30 minutes.
- **For herpes:**
Make a paste of Ghee and turmeric and dab it onto the affected areas several times a day.
- **For acne and impure skin:**
Mix 4 teaspoons of milk or water with half a teaspoon of turmeric powder, apply on your face and leave on for 20 minutes. Then wash off thoroughly.

