

Black Turmeric: A High Value Medicine Herb

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Introduction

Turmeric is a well known medicinal herb owing to its amazing health benefits. While yellow turmeric has been taking the health and culinary world by the storm, not many know about black turmeric. The scientific name of black turmeric is *Curcuma caesia* and it is also known as black zedoary. The plant that black turmeric comes from is a perennial herb that has pale yellow flowers with reddish border.



Cultivation of Black Turmeric

The plant is grown in a similar manner as common turmeric plant and just like yellow turmeric, black turmeric is available in both fresh and powder form. In some parts of Madhya Pradesh, the rhizomes are considered auspicious. The plant may be used to indicate abundance and the possession of this plant is said to prevent a shortage of food grains and cereals at home. The rhizome has a characteristic sweet smell due to the presence of essential oils. The plant has special significance for tribes in Manipur and some other states, where the paste from the rhizomes is applied on wounds as well as snakes and scorpion bites.

- Climate: *Curcuma caesia* usually grows in moist deciduous regions. The best season to plant turmeric is spring or summer.

- **Soil:** Rich organic soil that is moist and well-drained. It is grown on different types of soils from light black, ashy loam and red soils clay loam.
- **Harvesting:** The crop takes about nine months to mature. Harvesting is done in mid-January.

The research on the volatile rhizomes oil of *Curcuma caesia* resulted in the identification of 30 components, representing 97% of the oil. The composition of oils area s follows:

Camphor	28 %
Ar- turmerone	12 %
(Z)-Ocimene	8 %
Ar-Curcumene	7 %
1,8 ceneole	5 %
Elemene	5 %
Borneol	4 %
Bornyl acetate	3 %
Curcumene	3 %



Other research demonstrated di-phenylalkanooids, phenylpropene derivatives, terpenoids, flavonoids, steroids, and alkaloids as major constituents.

Medicinal Uses:

1. The paste is used to cure gastric issues, including stomach ache and dysentery.
2. It controls bleeding and induce quick healing in case of cuts or wounds and snake bites.
3. Black turmeric may provide relief from inflamed tonsils.
4. It provides relief from painful and stress joints.
5. It has antioxidants and anti-fungal properties and may help in fighting inflammation in the body.

CONCLUSION

Black turmeric is a rare herb. It is the underground portion of the stem, or rhizome, of the *Curcuma caesia* plant. The plant itself is sometimes grown as an ornamental, but the root has been used for centuries for medicinal and religious purposes. Black turmeric offers benefits similar to the orange variety, but the darker cultivar contains higher concentrations of

curcumin than any other *Curcuma* species. In Hindi, the herb is called Kali Haldi. It is used widely in India for health and religious purposes.

