

Black Turmeric: A High Value Medicinal Herb

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Introduction

Black turmeric (*Cucurma caesia*) is a rare herb, underground portion of stem or rhizome. Sometime the plant is grown for ornamental purpose but the root has been used for centuries for medicinal and religious purposes. Black Turmeric is native to North-eastern and Central India where it has been part of cultural ceremonies and medicinal remedies. It is used by many tribal communities in the state of M.P and Maharashtra. The herb is sold fresh or dried in market across and Southeast Asia.

In 2016, black turmeric has been listed as an endangered species by the Indian Agricultural Department, Orissa is the one state who came in front to protect and conserve the herb and on the central eastern coast along the Bay of Bengal.

Today due to high nutrition and health benefits the current price of black turmeric varies between Rs 500 to Rs 2500 according to Marathi farmer Dhananjay Raut he has sold black turmeric at the price of Rs 4000 per kg to medicinal sector including Ayurveda previous year.



Black turmeric has many properties like it has anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties. Also it contain alkaloids, terpenes, amino acid, carbohydrates, tannis flavours, flavonoides and so on. Most important its roots and rhizomes are both important as they

contain highest concentration of curcumin and also rhizome contain essential oil or aroma which is camphor. The volatile rhizome oil of *C.caesia* contains 30 components which represents 97.48% of the oil with camphor 28.3%, ar-turmerone 12.3% as the major constituents.

Medicinal Value of Black Turmeric:

1. Rhizomes are useful in treating leucoderma, piles, bronchitis, asthma, tumors and tuberculous glands of neck, enlargement of the spleen, epileptic seizures inflammation and allergic eruptions.
2. Intake of small amount of rhizome parts is claimed to expel gases from the stomach and cure menstrual cycle
3. The rhizomes are also used as a rubeficient to rub the body after taking Turkish bath.
4. Rhizome extract has been used as smooth muscle relaxation.
5. Children suffering from Pneumonia, Cough and Cold can be cured by taking the black turmeric.
6. In adults it can cure fever and asthma problem
7. People suffering from migraine can use it by applying fresh rhizome by crushing it, making paste and apply on the forehead
8. It is used to make instant relief for wounds and quick healing
9. Can cure the stomach problem like indigestion
10. Tonic are made for the brain and the heart
11. Used for depressive disorders
12. Smooth muscles relaxant and anti asthmatic activity evaluated

Conclusion

Black turmeric is grown as an ornamental purpose, 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 farmers can increase their income by cultivating the black turmeric as it not only beneficial to health but also farmers can sell their crop to companies like pharmaceutical companies, ayurvedic dealers, ayurvedic doctors and ayurvedic shops.