

Turmeric – *Curcuma longa*, *C. zeodaria*

Turmeric root is actually a tropical rhizome related to ginger and galangal. It has a thin papery skin that can be scraped off to reveal the bright orange, somewhat dry flesh inside. Turmeric is an important mainstay of cooking in Asia and gives the yellow colour to all curry blends.

A few years ago the US government granted an American company a patent on Turmeric when it was discovered that the spice had anti-tumour properties against numerous different cancers. The Indian government had to sue the US Patent office to have the patent reversed as Ayurvedic medicine has recognized the extraordinary curative powers of turmeric for more than 5000 years! Turmeric is now one of the most researched plants for anti-cancer properties.

Turmeric oil is primarily CO₂ or solvent extracted to retain the maximum amount of the bright yellow curcumin, which is thought by science, to be the most active compound in the plant. This hydrosol was distilled from a biodynamically grown crop, yielding just 1 pound of hydrosol from 3 pounds of rhizome. Its rapid action on 'suspect' skin spots and everything else, makes me quite certain that the anti-cancer properties of this plant reside in many of its chemical constituents not just the one or two currently of interest to patent-hungry drug companies.

Smell and Taste: the hydrosol has a fresh, quite bright top note followed by an earthy, green, slightly masculine, bass note. The taste is unique, spicy without being sharp or warm, mildly sweet but with the same earthy bottom note as the odour. I always taste the soil when I visit distilleries and plant growers, turmeric brings the soil to you

Therapeutics: Turmeric has shown efficacy against cancers of the skin, lungs, colon and breast as well as leukemia, neurodegenerative, cardiovascular, pulmonary, metabolic, autoimmune and neoplastic diseases. (No wonder a corporation wanted a patent!)

On a less dramatic level turmeric is one of the best skin healers being powerfully anti-oxidant. Use it for acne, eczema, psoriasis, hives, sunburn, rosacea or any inflammatory condition. Internally it purifies the liver making it a wonderful digestive aid and detoxifier. Take ½ tbsps to relieve bloat, gas and other side effects caused by excess.

It is neutral in effect, neither heating nor cooling so it can be used by all constitutional types. Quite frankly I think that turmeric should be taken in some form, every day by everyone, especially anyone with a history of illness or diagnosed with cancer regardless of location and prognosis. Medical research almost daily finds new modes and areas of action for this lowly little root and an ounce of turmeric is worth a pound of cure in my book.

Energetics: Turmeric sends shivers up my spine with the level of information it contains and confers in a very direct fashion. Turmeric has a habit of drawing our attention to certain areas of the body, or to certain emotions or thought processes, those that require our undivided attention, *now*. If turmeric prompts you to look at something, don't ignore the nudge, it may be an early warning sign or even an alert.

Turmeric holds the power of the sun as it translates to electromagnetic energy. Its bright orange colour provides 'warmth' without heat, it's pungency keeps us aware and present, it's thin skin and shallow growth make it vulnerable but its dense foliage provides protection. This is the voice of the earth and it is talking about healing.