



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Manjal



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Botanical Name	:	<i>Curcuma longa</i> Linn.
Tamil Name	:	Manjal
Sanskrit Name	:	Haridra, Marmarii
English Name	:	Turmeric

Distribution and Habitat:

Curcuma longa (L.) commonly known as Turmeric is a rhizomatous herbaceous perennial plant of *Zingiberaceae* family. Native to India and is widely cultivated in China, Sri Lanka, West and East Africa and other tropical countries. The plant is grown in tropics and sub-tropic regions at around 20 °C and 30 °C with sufficient rainfall.

The plant grows up to 2 m without stem and rootstock but with erect leafy shoots bearing up to twelve leaves. The leaves grow up to 1 meter; oblong or lanceolate, dark green.

The sheath and petiole have a similar length to the blade. Flowers sterile, pale yellow and reddish, flowering bracts purplish green. Rhizome bitter, balmy flavour with 2.5 – 7 cms long and 2.5 cms diameter.



Parts used: Leaves and Rhizome

Phyto-chemical constituents:

Curcuminoids (curcumin, desmethoxy curcumin, bis-desmethoxy curcumin and cyclocurcumin), terpenoids, flavonoids, phenyl-propene derivatives, alkaloids, diphenyl-alkanoids, steroids, acidic polysaccharides, volatile oils, essential oils, carbohydrates, fat, minerals, amide derivatives, amino acids, and proteins.

Uses:



Dried Turmeric root is the source of the spice turmeric, the ingredient that gives curry its characteristic yellow colour. Turmeric is used extensively in foods for both its flavour and colour. The main bioactive compound curcumin from turmeric is commercially available in capsules, energy drinks, soaps, tablets, ointments and cosmetics (Verna et al. 2018). Turmeric is considered to be highly auspicious and has been used extensively in various Indian ceremonies for millennium.

Medicinal uses:

Turmeric has a long tradition of use in the Chinese and Ayurvedic systems of medicine. Turmeric is a good antiseptic. It is ground into a paste with Neem leaves and applied over affected areas during measles for fast relief. Cough is reduced when consumed in powder form with pepper in lukewarm milk at bed time (Sudhakar, 2007). The juice from its leave has an anthelmintic effect and serves as a blood purifier. *C. longa* is also used to relieve dental issues and digestive troubles like discomfort or pain in the upper abdomen and acidity, indigestion, gas and ulcers. The tribes of Jhalda, Parulia District of West Bengal, apply rhizome paste to the body to relieve body pain. Assamese tribal women apply a fresh rhizome paste for skin infection and also to improve their complexion (Zhang et al. 2013). It is considered as a source of remedy to cure various problems such as blood purification, brain and heart tonic, asthma, leucoderma, piles, bronchitis, spleen enlargement, tumour, sinusitis, tuberculosis and cough. *C. longa* and its bioactive compounds possess numerous pharmacological activities such as antioxidant, hepato-protective, anti-osteoarthritis, anti-inflammatory, anticancer, anti-arthritic, neuro-protective, anti-diabetic, anti-diarrheal, anti-microbial, anti-atherosclerotic, antidepressant, anti-aging, wound healing and memory enhancing activity (Ayati et al. 2019).



Photo link: <https://www.naturallivingideas.com/grow-turmeric/>

