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Herbal medicine: summary for the public

Marjoram

Origanum majorana L., herba

This is a summary of the scientific conclusions reached by the Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC) on the medicinal uses of marjoram. The HMPC conclusions are taken into account by EU Member States when evaluating applications for the licensing of herbal medicines containing marjoram.

This summary is not intended to provide practical advice on how to use medicines containing marjoram. For practical information about using marjoram medicines, patients should read the package leaflet that comes with the medicine or contact their doctor or pharmacist.

What is marjoram?

Marjoram is the common name for the flowering shoots of the plant *Origanum majorana* L., herba.

The HMPC conclusions only cover marjoram preparations which are obtained by drying and comminuting (reducing into tiny pieces) the flowering shoots or by using a technique to extract compounds by putting the plant material in a solvent to dissolve compounds and form a semi-solid extract.

Herbal medicines containing these marjoram preparations are usually available as herbal tea to be drunk and in semi-solid forms to be applied to the skin.

Marjoram preparations may also be found in combination with other herbal substances in some herbal medicines. These combinations are not covered in this summary.

What are the HMPC conclusions on its medicinal uses?

The HMPC concluded that, on the basis of its long-standing use, marjoram medicines to be drunk can be used for treating symptoms of mild indigestion including bloating and flatulence and marjoram medicines to be applied to the skin can be used for the relief of irritated skin around the nostrils.

Marjoram medicines should only be used in adults for mild indigestion, and if symptoms last longer than 2 weeks or get worse during the use of the medicine a doctor or a qualified healthcare practitioner should be consulted. For the relief of irritated skin around the nostrils, marjoram medicines

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can be used in adults and children from 1 year of age. If symptoms last longer than 1 week, or signs of skin infection develop during the use of the medicine, a doctor or a qualified healthcare practitioner should be consulted. Detailed instructions on how to take marjoram medicines and who can use them can be found in the package leaflet that comes with the medicine.

What evidence supports the use of marjoram medicines?

The HMPC conclusions on the use of these marjoram medicines for mild indigestion and skin irritation are based on their 'traditional use'. This means that, although there is insufficient evidence from clinical trials, the effectiveness of these herbal medicines is plausible and there is evidence that they have been used safely in this way for at least 30 years (including at least 15 years within the EU). Moreover, the intended use does not require medical supervision.

In its assessment, the HMPC noted the lack of clinical studies with marjoram, but took into account the well documented use of this herbal medicine.

For detailed information on the marjoram assessment by the HMPC, see the HMPC assessment report.

What are the risks associated with marjoram medicines?

At the time of the HMPC assessment, no side effects had been reported with these medicines.

Further information on the risks associated with these marjoram medicines, including the appropriate precautions for their safe use, can be found in the monograph under the tab 'All documents' on the Agency's website: ema.europa.eu/Find medicine/Herbal medicines for human use.

How are marjoram medicines approved in the EU?

Any applications for the licensing of medicines containing marjoram have to be submitted to the national authorities responsible for medicinal products, which will assess the application for the herbal medicine and take into account the scientific conclusions of the HMPC.

Information on the use and licensing of marjoram medicines in EU Member States should be obtained from the relevant national authorities.

Other information about marjoram medicines

Further information on the HMPC assessment of marjoram medicines, including details of the Committee's conclusions, can be found under the tab 'All documents' on the Agency's website: ema.europa.eu/Find medicine/Herbal medicines for human use. For more information about treatment with marjoram medicines, read the package leaflet that comes with the medicine or contact your doctor or pharmacist.