



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 25657**

**Traditional Chinese medicine —  
*Curculigo orchioides* rhizome**

*Médecine traditionnelle chinoise — Rhizome de Curculigo  
orchioides*

**First edition  
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## Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 249, *Traditional medicine*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Traditional Chinese medicine*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

The *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome is the dried rhizome of *Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn. (Fam. Amaryllidaceae), which is known as *Xian Mao* (仙茅) in Chinese pinyin, *Curculiginis*, *Kali Musli* available in international markets, which has a long history of medicinal use and a wide range of clinical applications in China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Myanmar, India and other East Asian countries. The *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome is considered to have attributes beneficial to the kidney and liver channels, and it is traditionally valued and reported for treating impotence, limb limpness, arthritis of the lumbar and knee joints and watery diarrhea.

The *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome has a complex chemical composition, including various constituents such as phenols and phenolic glucosides, norlignans, terpenoids, alkaloids and flavones. Modern pharmacological studies have reported that phenols and phenolic glucosides, norlignans and terpenoids are the main active constituents in the *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome for enhancing adaptive effects, increasing immunomodulation, having anti-oxidant, anti-osteoporosis, hepatoprotective, oestrogenic activities and effects on sexual behaviour.

In global trade, based on Chinese customs data, there is a relatively large demand for *Curculigo orchioides* rhizomes in the Chinese Materia Medica market at home and abroad. Between 2017 and 2022, 200 to 300 tons of *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome have been exported to Japan, Korea, Hongkong of China and other countries and regions every year. In addition, between 2017 and 2022, 1 000 tons of *Curculigo orchioides* rhizomes have been imported from Myanmar and Vietnam every year.

As a globally used herbal medicine, the *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome has been widely used in polyherbal formulations of Traditional Chinese, Kampo and Indian medicines. It has also been included in the pharmacopoeia of many countries and regions, such as the Chinese Pharmacopoeia (2025 edition)<sup>[1]</sup>, the Korean Herbal Pharmacopoeia (4<sup>th</sup> edition)<sup>[2]</sup>, the Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards (Volume 4)<sup>[3]</sup> and the Ayurveda Pharmacopoeia of India (Part I, Volume 4)<sup>[4]</sup>. However, specifications and quality requirements in these standards are not unified due to the lack of an International Standard for the *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome.

Additionally, the quality of the *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome provided from different areas varies a lot. The *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome is ranked as a relatively high priority in the priority list of single herbal medicines for developing standards, as defined in ISO/TR 23975:2025 <sup>[5]</sup>. Thus, there is a clear and urgent need to develop an International Standard for harmonizing these existing standards, as well as ensuring the safety and effectiveness of the *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome.

As national implementations can differ, national standards bodies can modify the values given in 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 to adapt to their national standards. Examples of national and regional values are given in Annex D.

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# Traditional Chinese medicine — *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome

## 1 Scope

This document specifies the quality and safety requirements and test methods for the *Curculigo orchioides* rhizome, which is derived from the dried rhizome of *Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn. (Fam. Amaryllidaceae).

This document is applicable to *Curculigo orchioides* rhizomes that are sold and used as natural medicines in international trade, including Chinese materia medica (whole medicinal materials) and decoction pieces derived from this plant.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 18664, *Traditional Chinese Medicine — Determination of heavy metals in herbal medicines used in Traditional Chinese Medicine*

ISO/TS 21310, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Microscopic examination of medicinal herbs*

ISO 21371, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Labelling requirements of products intended for oral or topical use*

ISO 22217, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Storage requirements for raw materials and decoction pieces*

ISO 22258, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Determination of pesticide residues in natural products by gas chromatography*

ISO 23723:2021, *Traditional Chinese medicine — General requirements for herbal raw material and materia medica*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### **Curculigo orchioides** rhizome

dried rhizome of *Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn. (Fam. Amaryllidaceae)

## 4 Descriptions

In this document, the structure of *Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn. (Fam. Amaryllidaceae) and the dried rhizome are shown in [Figure 1](#).