

Mushroom - Benefits, Uses and Its Side Effects

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SUMMARY

A mushroom is the fleshy spore-bearing fruiting body of a fungus, typically produced above ground on soil or on its food source. The standard for the name 'mushroom' is the cultivated white button mushroom, *Agaricus bisporus*, hence the word "mushroom" is often applied to those fungi (Basidiomycota agaricomycetes) that have a stem, a cap and gills on the underside of the cap. Mushrooms are widely known for their great taste and amazing health benefits. A number of species of mushrooms are poisonous although some resemble certain edible species consuming them could be fatal.

INTRODUCTION

A mushroom is the reproductive structure produced by some fungi. It is somewhat like the fruit of a plant, except that the "seeds" it produces are in fact millions of microscopic spores that form in the gills or pores underneath the mushroom's cap. Mushrooms belong to the family *Agaricus* are not plants although they are classified as vegetables in the food kingdom. Mushrooms belong to the fungi kingdom and contain a host of essential nutrients. Mushrooms are actually saprophytes, organisms that depend on dead and decaying animal and plant matter for their nutrition. The body of the mushroom is generally spread over a large area and is hardly noticed. The part of the mushroom that we see is actually only the "fruit" of the vegetable. There are thousands of varieties of mushrooms-forming fungi across the world but scientists have been able to identify only about 10 percent of them.

Nutritional value of mushroom

Mushrooms are very good natural sources of vitamin D, germanium, a trace mineral, selenium, an antioxidant mineral as well as other minerals like copper, niacin, potassium and phosphorus. They are also rich in vitamin C, protein, calcium and iron. Furthermore, mushrooms also contain insoluble chitin and soluble beta glucans which are extremely beneficial for our health.

There are various types of mushrooms that are edible

- White mushrooms
- Cremini
- Portobello
- Shiitake
- Maitake
- Enoki
- Oyster

Nutritional facts per 100 grams

Calories- 22, Total Fat- 0.3g, Sodium-5mg, Potassium- 318mg, Total Carbohydrate- 3.3g and Protein- 3.1g

Vitamins and Minerals in Mushrooms

Vitamin D- 0.01, Vitamin C- 3%, Iron- 2% Vitamin B-6- 5% and Magnesium- 2%

Amazing Health Benefits of Mushrooms

Mushrooms helps to fight cancer: Mushrooms are rich in anti-oxidants that fight against the harmful free radicals in our body. If not acted upon, these free radicals tend to harm our body cells which might eventually lead to cancer. Selenium is a mineral found in mushrooms that facilitates the functioning of our liver enzymes and thus helps to detoxify certain cancer-causing compounds in our body. Vitamin D is also present in mushrooms which regulates the cell growth cycle and prevents the growth of cancer cells.

Mushrooms good for cholesterol level : Mushrooms have no cholesterol or fat and are very low in carbohydrates. They however contain fibre and other enzymes that help to lower cholesterol levels. Mushrooms

are also rich in lean protein content that helps to burn cholesterol. Thus consumption of mushrooms helps to regulate cholesterol levels and protects your heart.



Mushrooms good for heart patients : Mushrooms contain fibre, vitamin C and potassium which help to prevent cardiovascular diseases. Mushrooms have high potassium content and low sodium content and this combination helps to lower blood pressure. This in turn helps to lower blood pressure. This in turn helps to prevent the risks associated with high blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases. You can consume cream of mushroom soup for heartburn problem and acid reflux

Mushrooms helps to treat anemia: Anemia is caused due to the deficiency and is characterized by fatigue, headaches, digestive issues and reduced neural friction. Consumption of mushrooms soup help to prevent these symptoms as they are rich in iron. Iron helps in the formation of red blood cells and ensures that we remain healthy and fully functional.

Mushrooms good for bones and osteoporosis: Mushrooms contains calcium which helps to strengthen our bones and also aids in bone formation. Thus incorporating mushrooms in your diet will provide the necessary calcium that required for your bones. This will delay or prevent the onset of conditions like osteoporosis and other ailments related to degradation of bones like lack of mobility and joint pain.

Mushrooms help to prevent inflammation: Mushroom contains a powerful anti-oxidant called ergothioneine that helps to prevent inflammation. A particular type of mushroom, known as reishi mushroom, helps to fight diseases, lowers inflammation and reduces tumor growth and allergic reactions. These reishi mushrooms have been used for their anti-inflammatory properties for thousands of years in Asia.

Mushrooms increases absorption of iron: The copper content in mushroom helps to get iron properly absorbed from food and also facilitates its proper utilization by getting it released from the primary storage spots of our body like liver. Copper and iron work present in mushrooms together to ensure that we have healthy bones and they also prevent anemia.

Reishi mushroom for immune system: Mushrooms contain ergothioneine, an amino acid containing sulphur which is a powerful anti-oxidant and helps to increase body immunity. This compound helps remove all the free radicals which tend to cause various diseases in our body. Mushrooms also contain natural antibiotics which prevent growth of microbes and other fungal infections. Furthermore, the presence of vitamin A, B-complex and C in mushrooms also helps to strengthen our body immunity.

Mushrooms diet for weight loss: Mushrooms are rich in proteins and dietary fibres but they are very low in carbohydrates and have negligible amounts of fat or cholesterol. Beta -glucans present and chitin are the two types of dietary fibres present in mushrooms and they help to increase satiety and reduce appetite. These dietary fibers in mushrooms may help you feel fuller and help reduce the intake calories. You can make various mushrooms recipes for weight loss management. Add this amazing vegetable in your diet plan.

Uses of Mushroom

White button mushrooms are the most cultivated and it is widely used as an ingredient in both dishes and sauces. Mushrooms have vitamin D, selenium and anti-oxidants and thus are beneficial for our skin and thus are used widely in topical creams, serums and facial preparations. It is widely believed to have skin-whitening

capabilities. Due to the presence of iron, consumption of mushrooms also helps to prevent hair loss. They are rich in nutrients and rank higher than most vegetables and fruits in their nutrient density.

Side -Effects and Allergies of Mushrooms

It is not easy for a layman to differentiate wild mushrooms from healthy mushrooms. Consumption of wild mushrooms may result in severe illness in humans and can even cause death. As beta-glucans present in mushroom stimulate immune function, people with autoimmune diseases like arthritis, lupus, asthma and multiple sclerosis should avoid consuming it.

CONCLUSION

Mushrooms are one of the most popular and versatile gift of nature.it can be mixed into any food preparations or can be processed to give a new product. A lot of mushroom products are currently available in market such as mushroom pickle, seasonings, dried and canned and mushroom supplemental cosmetics etc. Apart from the food products many innovative products are emerging in other industries as well as medicines, mycellium based platforms and leather, biodegradable packaging etc. The fungi is a good source of income generation for the growers and also provides additional benefits through its processing. Hence mushrooms holds a bright future in every aspect owing to its diverse properties.

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