



Healthy4life.ca Newsletter - April 2022

Holistic nutrition includes body, mind and spirit. Articles will address each area.

Mushroom Series Part A

Edible Mushroom Basics & Terms

Mushrooms are the spore bearing fruiting body or reproductive structure produced by some fungi. They are found above ground, on soil or on its food source. There are over 1.5 million types of mushrooms. Mushrooms contain fibre and the B vitamins riboflavin, niacin and pantothenic acid.

Adaptogen: Herbal non-toxic plant based compounds that help your body respond to stress, anxiety, fatigue and wellbeing.

Antioxidant: Molecules that fight cell damage by neutralizing free radicals.

Certifications: To get high quality supplements look for brands that have a Health Canada Natural Products Number (NPN), the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) or the NSF International (NSF) seal. Look for certified organic, sustainably cultivated/grown/ processed, and backed by scientific research studies both in animals and humans.

Fibre: Soluble and insoluble fibre that provides food and housing for beneficial gut microbes, and it helps regulate bowel function. Resistant starches, although carbohydrates, are also considered dietary fibre.

Functional Mushrooms: Specific fungi known for health benefits beyond their nutritional components. There are 2 groups: medicinal mushrooms and adaptogenic mushrooms.

Polysaccharides: They are also called polycarbohydrates or glycan which are long chain polymeric carbohydrates and they are the most abundant carbohydrate in food.

Quality Products: To get high quality supplements look for brands that have the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) or the NSF International (NSF) seal. Always check with your health care team before taking mushroom products.

Scholarly Articles: Try to find current research by searching scholarly articles and using keywords on the specific mushroom and conditions to find useful abstracts of valid research and to help eliminate material that is just articles and media hype.



The Edible Mushroom Series: Part 1 Reishi (Ganoderma Lucidum or Lingzhi)

Form: Reddish brown kidney shape cap with bands or stripes.

Uses: Add to hot chocolate or decaffeinated coffee, many people add coconut butter and almond milk to improve the taste.

Taste & Texture: Very bitter.

Properties: Contain polysaccharides, antioxidants, beta-glucans, and is used to support the immune system and sleep cycles.

Growth: Reishi grows on sawdust, grain, cork or logs and it is woody with a glossy exterior. The colour ranges from red to black to green.



The Edible Mushroom Series: Part 2 Button, Cremini and Portobello (Agaricus bisporus)

Form: A white, young, mild, immature type of mushroom called button, a middle stage brown round mushroom shape 12 to 38 mm (1 to 1-1/2 inches) while the mature or full grown creminis are called portobello which is larger with a concave top and is wider.

Uses: Culinary, fibre, medicinal.

Taste & Texture: Meaty texture and flavour, slightly nutty or earthy.

Properties: Aromatase inhibitor, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory.

Growth: Native to grasslands of North America and Europe.



The Edible Mushroom Series: Part 3 Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*)

Form: Irregular cracked shape or lump similar to burnt charcoal.

Uses: Tea any time of day, latte, smoothie, pieces or powder.

Taste & Texture: Earthy, slightly bitter.

Properties: Antioxidant to support your immune system, no caffeine, adaptogenic
Improve hair, nails, skin

Growth: This black gold mushroom grows in the Northern hemisphere on birch trees and will also grow on maple or ash trees. For human consumption get your chaga from birch trees.



The Edible Mushroom Series: Part 4 Enoki or Enokitake (*Physalacriaceae*)

Form: Looks like long, white noodles.

Uses: To help support heart health, brain function and immunity.

Taste & Texture: Mild, slightly fruity.

Properties: Fibre, antioxidants, B vitamins.

Growth: Hardwood sawdust.

Next time: Mushroom Series Part B

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**Be healthy 4 llfe,
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