

Magical mushrooms



Want to enhance energy and immunity? Make room for mushrooms!

Considering fungi form the most popular modern medicines – antibiotics and statins, it's not surprising mushrooms have curative qualities. These natural pharmaceutical factories are antioxidant, brain boosting, immune balancing and nutrient rich. They're bursting with B vitamins, protein, fibre, potassium, calcium, phosphorus,

magnesium, selenium and zinc. Medicinal mushrooms don't feed candida and contain beta-glucans which increase immune cells and metabolise fat. Distinct from culinary or hallucinogenic mushrooms, medicinal varieties grow on trees. Chinese and Japanese medicine value medicinal mushrooms as anti-cancer and rejuvenative tonics. Tree growing mushrooms spring from a network of mycelium, the foundation of our food web. Just as medicinal mushrooms absorb nutrients and break down toxins in trees, they provide us with nutrition imbibed from their host tree and detoxify our body.

Mushrooming market: Enjoy fungi's fantastic benefits by brewing it into delicious drinks. The medicinal mushroom business is booming thanks to the latest trend of stirring them into therapeutic cuppas. Mushroom cafes are sprouting up all over the US, making mushies the 'functional food' on everybody's lips. Drinking mushrooms increases their absorption as hot water breaks down their tough cell wall. An Aussie company Life Cykel is growing mushrooms from recycled coffee grounds and turning them into tasty treats. This reduces the tonnes of coffee waste creating landfill. They also offer magic

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mushroom boxes that grow three crops of mushrooms from coffee grounds and mushroom beverages. My favourite is their organic Magick Lion's Mane Latte for focus with lion's mane mushroom, maca, vanilla powder and carob powder. You can also mix alkaline mushrooms with acidic coffee to create a creamy balanced blend. Of the hundred plus medicinal mushrooms four are considered champion champignons – chaga, cordyceps, reishi and shiitake.

Chaga: This charcoal coloured King of mushrooms is a saviour for stress, skin and immunity. It has more antioxidants than

anything on earth and is a natural anti-viral vaccine. Chaga's melanin content ensures smooth skin. The adaptogenic action of chaga makes it invaluable during times of anxiety, exercise and inflammation.

Cordyceps: When three athletes set five new world records in distance running in the 1993 National Games in China, the coach revealed their secret weapon was cordyceps. This caterpillar shaped mushroom increases oxygen intake up to 50 per cent, fuelling endurance, energy and accelerating recovery. Cordyceps is also beneficial for asthmatics and has reported chemo-protective properties.

Reishi: Nature's chill pill, red reishi is relaxing, anti-viral and antibacterial. As an immunostimulant it is useful in immuno-compromised conditions. It contains canthaxanthin, an antioxidant and reported anti-cancer compound. Reishi regulates blood pressure and hormones according to studies.

Shiitake: Shiitake is high in collagen forming copper which creates youthful skin. Shiitake's a strong antiviral, cholesterol-lowering, immune stimulating, liver cleansing addition to your daily diet. ☑

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