

NUTRITIONAL VALUE FUNGI --- Series Health & Nutrition Print E-mail

250px-ChampignonMushroom



Photo: wikipedia

The extended family of wild mushrooms includes in its ranks very tasty and beneficial species, but also highly threatening to fatal.

Choosing carefully the first and enjoying as more frequent performances of high biological value protein, supplying precious metals and minerals, keep away cholesterol, and if we want to try our luck in the kitchen we have the perfect material for amazing dishes.

Mushrooms, the elixir of immortality! It is precisely this view of scientists that prevails today, but this was true for the ancient Egyptians, as evidenced by written 4,600 years. The Pharaoh, in fact, had adopted a law, according to which only they and not the common people were allowed to taste. In other cultures around the world, Russia, China, Greece, throughout Latin America, some species of mushrooms used for their hallucinogenic properties and their attributed magical properties. They deemed likely to give great power to help find lost objects but also to lead the soul to the gods. Although mushrooms are usually classified in the same category with vegetables, in fact it is something completely different from them. This fungus, a kind of fruit without flowers and chlorophyll, which grows in shady and moist environment on a nutritional basis, such as wood (tree trunks), the humus and more.

They contribute to good health

Considered excellent food, as they contain negligible amounts of fat and sugars, but significant amounts of fiber. They also have the same proteins as the meat (high biological value), without the toxins, fat and cholesterol found in it, therefore they are ideal for vegetarians. As yet, an ideal choice for those who want to lose weight, since they contain few calories (13 calories per 100 grams.). The minimum sodium, finally, we find them, make them particularly dear to those who are required to follow diets low in salt.

Minerals and metals

Mushrooms contain abundant minerals and trace elements such as potassium, an electrolyte that is essential for maintaining the balance of electrolytes and water in the body, the proper functioning of the skeleton and muscles of the heart, the secretion of insulin from the pancreas, the maintaining the osmotic pressure etc.

Mushrooms are also a good source of phosphorus, which helps build bones and teeth, as well as the transfer of genetic information (DNA-RNA) in the body.

The copper content of mushrooms is also very high (100 gr. Mushrooms covering half the recommended daily intake). Copper helps to maintain the elasticity of arteries and color of the scalp, is actively involved in the metabolism of amino acids and contributes to the integrity of the nervous system.

It is also estimated that there may have cardioprotective and anticancer activity due to their high content in selenium. The ratio of selenium to

cancer associated with an enzyme comprising selenium (glutathione peroxidase), which binds carcinogenic free radicals produced in the body.

Zinc, an essential component of mushrooms, contributes to the normal development of the body, the proper functioning of the immune and reproductive systems and on embryogenesis during pregnancy.

It is characteristic that mushrooms contain negligible amounts of sodium, making it suitable to their consumption even by hypertensive individuals. Instead, care, why should be avoided by those suffering from hyperuricemia, as they contain a large quantity of uric acid.

Vitamins

They are also good sources of vitamins, since they contain niacin (vitamin B3), which is important for energy production in the body and for the natural metabolism of the cell.

They are rich in riboflavin (vitamin B2), thus favoring the absorption of iron and the production of red blood cells.

Equally beneficial is thiamine (vitamin B1), which contributes to the smooth functioning of the heart and nervous system.

Pantothenic acid plays a key role in the metabolism of fats and cholesterol synthesis.

Also, this is the only food of plant origin contain large amounts of vitamin B12, making it an ideal food for vegetarians. Vitamin B12 is involved in the process of hematopoiesis and in case of shortage caused megaloblastic anemia.

Folic acid, which is involved in cell division and proliferation, protein and nucleic acid synthesis (DNA-RNA), and in the process of erythropoiesis.

Besides these water-soluble vitamins, mushrooms contain high quantities and fat-soluble vitamin D, which helps absorption of calcium, strengthens the immune system and contribute to the smooth functioning of the heart and muscles.

How clean

All varieties of mushrooms "injured" easily and should be treated with care.

To clean them, wipe them with a damp cloth or wash with cool water (do not soak, because they absorb water and become soft and tasteless).

Cut and throw away the bottom of the "stem", which usually is hard and covered with soil

Nutritional information (per 100 grams).

Energy	25 Kcal
Water	91,8 gr
Proteins	2,9 gr
Lipids0,3 gr
Carbohydrates4 gr
Fibre	1,2 gr
Potassium	3,7 gr
Phosphorus104 mg
Copper	0,5 mg
.....	.8,8 Mg Selenium

Sodium4 mg
Niacin 4 mg
Riboflavin 0,4 mg
Thiamine0,1 mg
Pantothenic acid1,5 mg
Vitamin B12 0,04 mg
Vitamin D 76.000 IU

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Photo: wikipedia

How to choose

Good quality fresh white mushrooms (cultivated) must be tight and "crunchy" texture.

If the cut by hand, "break" easily, and are divided into fibers.

Uniformly rounded "caps", with smooth glossy surface without spots and dents.

The part below the 'caps' should not show gaps.

How to preserve

It is advisable to consume fresh mushrooms as quickly as possible from the moment you buy. However, they maintain crispy several days in the refrigerator if the wrap paper and then into a plastic, which will make holes for aeration.

We can keep them in the freezer if properly prepare. After divide the "caps" from the "leg", put a hot non-stick frying pan without any fat and cook until they make almost all their water. Let cool and store it in a nylon bag or plastic utensils.

The multitudinous species

Across Europe, as in our country, there are about 4,000-5,000 species of mushrooms, of which only 300 are edible. The rest is dangerous to humans and can cause simple indigestion to fatal poisoning. Therefore, only very versed can safely enjoy the fascinating "hunt" of mushrooms or even a beginners accompanied by an experienced collector ...

Wild Greek mushrooms

Mushrooms grow in early spring and autumn when the weather is warm and preceded rain. Some species of wild edible mushrooms found in Greece is as follows:

Morcheles: They are considered the most valuable and delicious mushrooms after truffles. Sprout almost everywhere, in hillsides, forests, gardens, caves, meadows. The "cap" them, which is spongy, and the

"stem" is hollow. They have deep grooves and spots in amber, gray and dark gray color.

Metabolites: sprout in the forest, have a brown "cap" and spongy "stem", which however can not be used. They have nothing to envy from French mushroom of Bordeaux or the Porcini located in Italy.

Alekates or Alekatites: Eaten only the "cap" them, which is much like a Japanese umbrella. Usually grow in the plains and meadows.

White mushrooms or buttons: This is the variety that is grown mushrooms. Grow primarily where animal manure and before cooking should cut the bottom from the "stem" and to wash them too well.

Lykopordes or Poporda: They look like white ball and, when ripe, the seeds leaving a small pinhole in the top of the "cap" them with the breeze or rain. They are eaten only when it is "young" and whitewashed.

Species cultivated

White mushrooms (Paris): It is white, with firm flesh and a smooth surface. They have a delicate aroma and is eaten as the "cap" and the "stem" them.

Plefrotous: Have light beige color and deep folds. Not known for their fragrance, but it is very tasty and crunchy.

Dried mushrooms

European varieties:

Sep, Santerel, Morel (Morcheles)

We need to soften 10-30 'in lukewarm water and dry them before cooking them. We can use the water will soften the mushrooms in September to give flavor to food.

Chinese mushrooms:

Soak in warm water for about 30 minutes before cooking them and throw their hard stems.

Truffles

The rarest, famous and expensive mushrooms in the world. Especially the black truffle Perigkor, which grows in the area of Perigko of southwestern France. It grows under the soil and discovered by ... pigs or specially trained hounds. The flavor is very strong and only a small amount to give tone to the food. The truffles are eaten only cooked. The white truffle from Piedmont, Italy also has a strong taste, but certainly a greater quantity to the savory colored dish which will be used and is cheaper than the French. Besides cooked, and eaten raw, grated in salads and risottos.

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