

Introductory Text

When it comes to vitamins mushrooms really punch above their weight with almost one quarter of your daily requirements of riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin and vitamin D in just three button mushrooms. They are also the only non-animal source of Vitamin D – which research now links with a reduced risk of a range of cancers, diabetes and multiple sclerosis.

To find out more about the vitamin impact of mushrooms, why not LISTEN to Accredited Practising Dietitian, author and University Lecturer, Glenn Cardwell in his discussion with Tony McManus. A transcript of the interview is also available [HERE](#).

Mushrooms and vitamins

Interview Glenn Cardwell / Tony McManus

Date – 3rd September 2007

Tony - Glenn Cardwell is back with us. An Accredited Practising Dietitian, he is an author, a university lecturer and an expert on mushroom nutrition and is here to answer some questions on the vitamin content of mushrooms. We have spoken before and we have mentioned the essential minerals found in mushrooms; surely there would have to be some vitamins as well?

Glenn Cardwell – Absolutely Tony! Mushrooms really punch above their weight when it comes to vitamins. In fact they have got more riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin and vitamin D than you will find in vegetables. A 100 g serving of mushrooms would give you 25 per cent of most of those vitamins.

Tony - Just give us a brief background if you will on each of the main vitamins in mushrooms.

Glenn Cardwell - The riboflavin and the biotin are very much involved in the release of energy from the body cells through the production of glucose and a serve of mushroom will give you about 30 per cent of your riboflavin and biotin requirements. Niacin is a bit like riboflavin and is actually involved in cell metabolism and the pantothenic acid, which is an essential B group vitamin, is involved in, the production of brain transmitters, hormones and of course haemoglobin.

A serve of mushrooms will give you about a quarter of your requirements for the whole day - three button mushrooms. And there is a modest amount of folate too and, of course, Tony we have heard a lot about folate over the years

because folate is a very important vitamin to reduce the risk of having spinal deformities in babies.

Tony - Hasn't there been some very exciting recent research on vitamin D in mushrooms?

Glenn Cardwell - Absolutely! It is not well known that mushrooms are the only non-animal source of vitamin D. Just a little bit of sunlight or a little bit of ultraviolet radiation is actually seen to really boost up the vitamin D levels of mushrooms. There has been some research coming out of both the US and Finland showing that just have five minutes of sunlight will boost up the vitamin D levels and give you roughly the same amount that you will require for a whole day.

We are about to start some Australian research at the University of Western Sydney to see how we can do that properly in Australia. So it could well be an important source of vitamin D in the future We know that vitamin D is linked to a reduced risk of a range of cancers and diabetes and multiple sclerosis. It is a very exciting vitamin right now.

Tony - Glenn we haven't yet mentioned vitamin B 12 and I think that most of us would have considered mushrooms to be "meat for vegetarians".

Glenn Cardwell – Absolutely, this is something that was probably started in about the mid-1980s because there was some Australian government analysis of mushrooms that found there was actually quite a high vitamin B12 level. Now there has been some speculation since then that the vitamin B12 was really just on the surface of the skin and if you brushed the surface then the vitamin B12 was no longer there. So what we are doing through new research at University of Western Sydney is to test the vitamin B12 of a whole range of mushrooms at different stages of their life cycle to see if we can in the future say that they contain the vitamin B12. Now, we won't get to see those research results until about 2008-09.

Tony – Glenn, how much mushroom should we be eating to get the right vitamin benefits?

Glenn Cardwell - Well Tony, we are looking at about a 100 g serve each day will give you the benefits for both the vitamins and the minerals. That works out to be about three button mushrooms in a serve and if you want more information on the wonderful health benefits of mushrooms look just go to www.mushroomsforlife.net

Tony – That's www.mushroomsforlife.net