

## Introductory Text

“You are what you eat” is a saying that reflects the need to think about your food intake. To maintain healthy weight we should all be looking for a balanced diet that includes foods low in fat and kilojoules and with a mixture of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. In the following interview Accredited Practising Dietitian, author and university lecturer, Glenn Cardwell makes a strong case to include mushrooms in the daily diet. To find out more you are invited to LISTEN to the interview or alternatively download a transcript of the interview [HERE](#).

## Mushrooms and weight loss

### Interview Glenn Cardwell / Tony McManus

Date – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2007

**Tony** - Glenn Cardwell, Accredited Practising Dietitian and author, university lecturer and an expert on mushroom nutrition. He is back here to answer some questions on mushrooms and the role they can play in maintaining a healthy weight. It is very important. We all know how Australians are putting on weight at an alarming rate. There are many diets promoting weight loss and I think we all know also that doing more exercise and eating less food, especially fatty foods may be going to be the key to weight loss. So we ask the question Glenn, does the humble mushroom have a role to play in any of this?

**Glenn Cardwell** - Absolutely Tony! When we look at the nutrition profile for mushrooms there is basically no fat in a mushroom, there are very few kilojoules and then you've got all the other benefits, the vitamins, the minerals that come with mushrooms, and the antioxidants. So I think it's got a great role to play in keeping our weight healthy.

**Tony** - There has been a fair bit of research now on the relationship between mushrooms and weight.

**Glenn Cardwell** – Well, there has and there was some research released in mid-2007. This has come from John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. What they did was to take a meal and took out the meat part and replaced it with mushrooms. They found that over four days people consumed roughly 200 cal (that works out to be about 800 kJ) less a day, for four days. So it seemed to have a significant effect on helping us to control our eating and eating less food. Now, what's going to happen from here on in it is that they are going to research to see whether this can be maintained over a long period of time.

**Tony** - We are always being told to eat low Glycaemic Index foods. For those of us not too sure you might just explain what is the GI of the mushroom?

**Glenn Cardwell** – The Glycaemic Index is a measure of your blood glucose response to a food and people are saying if you keep your Glycaemic Index foods low then you've got a better chance of controlling your eating and controlling your weight. Now, the beauty about the mushroom is that the Glycaemic Index is so low that you can't even measure it because it's just a food that has almost no effect on your blood glucose levels. So that means it's perfect for everybody, especially for people who have got diabetes.

**Tony** – Grandma and Mum used always say "you have got to have your fibre, you've got to have fibre love". So I'd imagine the mushrooms also has plenty of fibre, that's what we always grew up with didn't we?

**Glenn Cardwell** - Yes indeed Tony! It's got fibre. A 100 g serve of mushrooms will give you a modest amount of fibre and the fibre in mushrooms is interesting because it seems to have the benefit of helping to control your blood cholesterol levels as well. There may be other benefits too that we're not too sure about because we know the fibre mushroom is different to the fibre you will find in fruits and vegetables.

**Tony** – They are just beautiful and we are about to have some. So how many should we be eating at this particular time Glenn?

**Glenn Cardwell** - We know that the mushroom is very low in kilojoules, very low in fat, very abundant in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants and I would say to you Tony, 100 g each day is what you need to get the benefits from mushrooms. That works out to be about three button mushrooms a day, so it's not a lot. And if you want some more information on the health benefits of mushrooms please go to [www.mushroomsforlife.net](http://www.mushroomsforlife.net)

**Tony** - That address again is [www.mushroomforlife.net](http://www.mushroomforlife.net)