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Imagine strolling one morning throughout your garden and finding a series of mushrooms with 5 to 18 cm wide caps. These mushrooms have colors ranging from white, grayish, to dull reddish-brown. Moreover, these mushrooms give off the scent of almonds. Youâ€™d almost want to pick one up and eat it, though youâ€™d probably wonder if theyâ€™re actually safe. If youâ€™re fortunate, you may have Agaricus blazei Murill mushrooms growing in your garden.

These mushrooms were originally discovered in a small mountain town in Brazil called Piedade. Its inhabitants gave Agaricus blazei various names like Cogumelo de Deus (mushroom of God), Cogumelo do Sol (mushroom of the sun), and Cogumelo Princesa (princess mushroom). Japanese mycologists have named it Himematsutake, though it bears no association with the female character of a popular video game series. Aside from being palatable, modern research has proven that this mushroom can treat certain ailments like cancer, type-2 diabetes, and high cholesterol. Agaricus blazei can also radically boost the immune system.

In 1980, the Japanese Cancer Association reported that Agaricus blazei contained high levels of beta-glucan, which are potent fighters of tumor cells. Beta-glucan from Agaricus blazei can also be absorbed into the body more easily than those from other mushrooms like shiitake and reishi. Scientists have since concluded that Agaricus blazei can halt the spread of cancer cells in the body.

Agaricus blazei also contains linolic acid. Linolic acid reduces cholesterol levels and lowers blood pressure. A 2002 study stated that volunteers who ingested Agaricus blazei experienced a significant drop in their cholesterol levels after ingesting it for eight weeks.

As mentioned earlier, ingesting Agaricus blazei is also known to boost the immune system. Our bodies are equipped with an immune system that wards off disease-causing bacteria and viruses. The immune system also neutralizes the effects of harmful substances in food additives and other harmful foreign invaders. Researchers have found that Agaricus blazei activates our immune system and increases the output of antibodies, which helps the body fight these aggressors more effectively.

Agaricus blazei can also help individuals who are struggling with type-2 diabetes. Sufferers of this disease usually have a condition called "insulin resistance", meaning they cannot absorb insulin properly, which is normally used to prevent blood sugar from increasing. Vegetable fiber is good for treating diabetes since it is not an insulin-stimulant. Agaricus blazei has an abundant supply of vegetable fibers for that purpose.

While you can eat that almond-scented mushroom, itâ€™s better to consume it in capsule form for better absorption. More importantly, you should check the bottles and note the levels of compounds used. You can read more about Agaricus blazei at agaricus.org/index.html

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