INJ INTERNATIONAL NEUROUROLOGY JOURNAL

Nutrition Value of Mushroom Intake And Its Impact On Human Health

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Abstract

Introduction: Mushrooms have been considered as ingredient of gourmet cuisine across the globe; especially for their unique flavor and have been valued by humankind as a culinary wonder. Objectives: The basic aim of this study is to find the nutrition value of mushroom intake and its impact on human health. Material and methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted in University of Ha'il, Saudi Arabia from January 2023 till November 2023. The university community served as the target population, comprising students, faculty, and staff. A structured questionnaire was developed to gather information on dietary habits, including the frequency and types of mushrooms consumed, as well as other dietary components. Health parameters such as BMI, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels were also assessed. Dietary intake data were analyzed using nutritional software to estimate the daily intake of calories, macronutrients, and micronutrients. Results: Data were collected from 300 participants from both genders. The average daily caloric intake among participants was 2,000 kcal, with mushrooms contributing approximately 5% to the total daily caloric intake. Macronutrient analysis revealed that mushrooms were a notable source of dietary fiber (10g/day) and provided moderate amounts of protein (5g/day). Micronutrient analysis indicated significant contributions from mushrooms to daily selenium intake (40µg/day) and vitamin D2 intake (10µg/day). Conclusion: It is concluded that mushroom intake within is associated with positive nutritional outcomes, including favorable lipid profiles and increased dietary fiber consumption. The educational intervention appears to have a positive impact on participants' knowledge and dietary intentions, highlighting the potential for targeted interventions to promote healthier eating habits.

Keywords: Nutrition, Lipid, Health, Consumption, Dietary

Introduction

Mushrooms have been considered as ingredient of gourmet cuisine across the globe; especially for their unique flavor and have been valued by humankind as a culinary wonder. More than 2,000 species of mushrooms exist in nature, but around 25 are widely accepted as food and few are commercially cultivated. Mushrooms are considered as a delicacy with high nutritional and functional value, and they are also accepted as nutraceutical foods; they are of considerable interest because of their organoleptic merit, medicinal properties, and economic significance [1]. The consumption of mushrooms has gained increasing attention due to their unique nutritional profile and potential health benefits. Rich in essential nutrients and bioactive compounds, mushrooms have become a focal point in dietary discussions [2]. This introduction explores the nutritional value of mushroom intake and its multifaceted impact on human health, encompassing aspects such as immune modulation, cardiovascular health, and metabolic well-being [3].

Figure 01: Locally grown Mushrooms in Abha and Jizan

Mushrooms, classified as fungi, represent a unique and versatile component of human nutrition, showcasing a myriad of bioactive compounds that contribute to their health-promoting properties [4]. This extended exploration delves deeper into the nutritional intricacies of mushroom intake, examining the specific constituents that make mushrooms a valuable addition to a well-rounded diet and elucidating the potential implications for human health [5]. Mushrooms are low in calories and fat, making them a favorable choice for those aiming to maintain a healthy weight. They are also rich in essential nutrients, including vitamins such as riboflavin, niacin, and pantothenic acid, and minerals like selenium, copper, and potassium. Additionally, mushrooms are a notable source of dietary fiber, contributing to digestive health and metabolic well-being [6].

Beyond their basic nutritional content, mushrooms harbor an impressive array of bioactive compounds with demonstrated health benefits [7]. Beta-glucans, for instance, exhibit immune-modulating properties, enhancing the body's defense mechanisms [8]. Ergothioneine, a naturally occurring antioxidant in mushrooms, contributes to cellular protection by scavenging free radicals [9]. Furthermore, mushrooms are known for their ergosterol-derived compounds, such as vitamin D2, which can positively impact bone health and calcium metabolism. The immune-modulating properties of mushrooms have garnered significant scientific interest. Beta-glucans, found abundantly in various mushroom species, stimulate immune cells, influencing the body's defense mechanisms against infections and diseases [10]. The potential role of mushroom intake in bolstering immune response is particularly pertinent in the context of promoting overall health and resilience. Studies suggest a potential link between mushroom consumption and cardiovascular health [10]. The presence of bioactive compounds like beta-glucans and antioxidants may contribute to managing risk factors associated with heart disease. Additionally, mushrooms are naturally low in sodium and high in potassium, a combination that supports maintaining healthy blood pressure levels. Mushrooms may exert positive effects on metabolic health. The dietary fiber in mushrooms contributes to satiety and may aid in weight management [11]. Moreover, certain bioactive compounds may influence lipid metabolism, potentially contributing to the prevention of metabolic disorders. Chronic inflammation is implicated in various health conditions, including chronic diseases. Some mushrooms possess anti-inflammatory properties attributed to compounds like ergothioneine and polyphenols. These properties may play a role in mitigating inflammatory responses within the body. The bioavailability of

nutrients in mushrooms is influenced by their preparation and cooking methods. Understanding the optimal ways to cook and consume mushrooms enhances the absorption of their valuable nutrients, ensuring individuals can maximize the health benefits derived from their intake [12].

Objectives

The basic aim of this study is to find the nutrition value of mushroom intake and its impact on human health.

Material and methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted in University of Ha'il, Saudi Arabia from January 2023 till November 2023.The university community served as the target population, comprising students, faculty, and staff. A stratified random sampling method was utilized to recruit participants from various academic disciplines, ensuring representation across diverse age groups and backgrounds. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and ethical approval was secured from the University of Ha'il Institutional Review Board.

Inclusion criteria

Individuals of all genders and ages are eligible for participation.
Participants should have the ability to provide informed consent for their involvement in the study.
Subjects must be willing to disclose their dietary habits, including the frequency and types of mushrooms consumed.
Availability for anthropometric measurements, blood pressure readings, and blood sample collection is required.

Exclusion criteria

Participants with known allergies to mushrooms or relevant dietary restrictions that prevent mushroom consumption will be excluded.
Pregnant and lactating individuals will be excluded due to potential variations in dietary habits and health parameters during these physiological states.
Individuals with pre-existing medical conditions that significantly impact dietary choices or health parameters, such as diabetes or cardiovascular diseases, will be excluded to minimize confounding factors.
Participants on specialized diets or supplements that could affect nutritional assessments will be excluded.

Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed to gather information on dietary habits, including the frequency and types of mushrooms consumed, as well as other dietary components. Health parameters such as BMI, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels were also assessed. Dietary intake data were analyzed using nutritional software to estimate the daily intake of calories, macronutrients, and micronutrients. A specific focus was placed on quantifying the nutritional value derived from mushroom consumption. Anthropometric measurements, including height and weight, were collected to calculate BMI. Blood pressure readings were obtained using standardized procedures. Blood samples were collected for lipid profile analysis, providing insights into participants' cardiovascular health.

Statistical Analysis-

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS v29.0. Descriptive statistics summarized the demographic and dietary data. Correlation analyses assessed potential associations between mushroom intake and health parameters. Multivariate analyses were employed to control for confounding variables.

Results

Data were collected from 300 participants from both genders. The average daily caloric intake among participants was 2,000 kcal, with mushrooms contributing approximately 5% to the total daily caloric intake. Macronutrient analysis revealed that mushrooms were a notable source of dietary fiber (10g/day) and provided moderate amounts of protein (5g/day). Micronutrient analysis indicated significant contributions from mushrooms to daily selenium intake (40µg/day) and vitamin D2 intake (10µg/day).

Table 01: Nutritional composition of mushrooms

Nutrient	Daily Intake (Average)	Mushroom Contribution	Contribution Percentage
Calories (kcal)	2,000	100	5%
Protein (g)	75	5	7%
Dietary Fiber (g)	20	10	50%

Selenium (µg)	50	40	80%
Vitamin D2 (µg)	15	10	67%

Anthropometric measurements revealed an average BMI of 25, falling within the normal weight range. Blood pressure readings indicated a mean value of 120/80 mmHg, reflecting a generally healthy cardiovascular status among participants. Lipid profile analysis demonstrated favorable levels, with total cholesterol at 180 mg/dL, LDL cholesterol at 100 mg/dL, HDL cholesterol at 50 mg/dL, and triglycerides at 120 mg/dL.

Table 02: Health parameters and mushrooms consumption patterns

Health Parameter	**Average Value**	**Interpretation**
BMI	25	Normal Weight
Blood Pressure (mmHg)	120/80	Healthy
Total Cholesterol (mg/dL)	180	Desirable
LDL Cholesterol (mg/dL)	100	Optimal
HDL Cholesterol (mg/dL)	50	Protective
Triglycerides (mg/dL)	120	Normal
Mushroom Variety	**Average Frequency per Week**	**Common Usage**
Shiitake	3	Stir-fries, Soups
Button	2	Salads, Pizza
Oyster	1	Grilled Dishes

Participants reported diverse mushroom consumption patterns, with an average frequency of three servings per week. Shiitake and button mushrooms were the most commonly consumed varieties. The majority of participants reported incorporating mushrooms into various meals, including salads, stir-fries, and soups.

Table 03: Correlation between health parameters and mushrooms consumption

Correlation	**Strength**	**Significance**
Mushroom Intake vs. Dietary Fiber Intake	Strong (r = 0.80)	$p < 0.01$
Mushroom Intake vs. LDL Cholesterol Levels	Moderate (r = -0.60)	$p < 0.05$
Mushroom Intake vs. BMI	Weak (r = 0.20)	$p > 0.05$
Mushroom Intake vs. Blood Pressure	Weak (r = 0.15)	$p > 0.05$

Correlation analyses revealed a positive association between mushroom intake frequency and dietary fiber intake ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, participants with higher mushroom intake exhibited lower LDL cholesterol levels ($r = -0.45$, $p < 0.05$). No significant correlation was observed between mushroom intake and BMI or blood pressure.

Table 04: Adherence to dietary guidelines

Dietary Guideline	**Percentage of Participants Meeting/Exceeding Guidelines**
Daily Dietary Fiber Intake	85%

Participants who attended the educational intervention sessions demonstrated a 20% increase in knowledge regarding the nutritional benefits of mushrooms. Post-intervention surveys indicated a positive shift in dietary choices, with 70% expressing an intention to increase mushroom consumption in their daily meals.

Table 05: Fatty acid content of selected edible mushrooms

Mushroom Species	**Saturated Fatty Acids (g/100g)**	**Monounsaturated Fatty Acids (g/100g)**	**Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids (g/100g)**	**Omega-3 Fatty Acids (mg/100g)**	**Omega-6 Fatty Acids (mg/100g)**
Shiitake (Lentinula edodes)	0.2	0.1	1.2	10	1200
Oyster (Pleurotus ostreatus)	0.3	0.2	1.5	15	800
Portobello (Agaricus bisporus)	0.5	0.3	2.0	20	1000
Maitake (Grifola frondosa)	0.4	0.2	1.8	18	900

Enoki (Flammulina velutipes)	0.1	0.1	0.5	5	300

Comparative analysis against dietary guidelines revealed that 80% of participants met or exceeded the recommended daily intake of dietary fiber, emphasizing the role of mushrooms in contributing to overall dietary quality.

Discussion

The findings of this study, which investigated the nutritional impact of mushroom intake on human health within the University of Ha'il community, provide valuable insights into the potential benefits associated with incorporating mushrooms into daily dietary patterns. The observed contributions of mushrooms to daily caloric intake, macronutrients, and micronutrients align with previous research, emphasizing their role as a nutrient-dense food source [13-15]. Notably, the substantial contribution to dietary fiber, selenium, and vitamin D2 intake underscores mushrooms' potential in enhancing overall nutritional profiles. The average values of health parameters, including BMI, blood pressure, and lipid profiles, reflect a generally favorable health status among participants [16]. The observed optimal levels of LDL cholesterol and triglycerides suggest a potential role of mushroom consumption in promoting cardiovascular health, corroborating studies that link certain bioactive compounds in mushrooms to lipid metabolism regulation [17].

Participants exhibited diverse mushroom consumption patterns, favoring varieties such as shiitake and button mushrooms. The incorporation of mushrooms into various meals underscores their versatility in culinary applications, potentially contributing to sustained adherence to mushroom-rich diets [18]. The positive correlation between mushroom intake frequency and dietary fiber intake is consistent with the known fiber content of mushrooms. The inverse correlation between mushroom intake and LDL cholesterol levels suggests a potential cardiovascular health benefit associated with mushroom consumption [19-20]. However, the weak correlations with BMI and blood pressure indicate that multiple factors influence these health parameters [21]. The post-intervention increase in knowledge and participants expressing intent to increase mushroom consumption suggest that targeted educational interventions can effectively influence dietary choices. This highlights the importance of nutritional education in promoting healthier eating habits within the university community [22].

The high percentage of participants meeting or exceeding daily dietary fiber intake guidelines suggests that mushroom consumption contributes significantly to overall dietary fiber intake [23]. This adherence to dietary guidelines is indicative of the potential for mushrooms to enhance the nutritional quality of individuals' diets. While the study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations [24]. The self-reported nature of dietary data introduces the potential for recall bias, and the cross-sectional design limits the establishment of causal relationships. Future research could employ longitudinal designs and objective measures of dietary intake to enhance the robustness of findings.

Conclusion

It is concluded that mushroom intake within is associated with positive nutritional outcomes, including favorable lipid profiles and increased dietary fiber consumption. The educational intervention appears to have a positive impact on participants' knowledge and dietary intentions, highlighting the potential for targeted interventions to promote healthier eating habits.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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