

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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FOR THE MEDIA

What is it?

Oyster mushroom has not been shown to treat cancer in humans.

Oyster mushroom is an edible fungus. It is used in traditional medicine to treat high cholesterol, infections, diabetes, and cancer. Lab experiments suggest cholesterol-lowering, antifungal, and antitumor properties.

Studies in human are limited however. One study did not show cholesterol-lowering effects. Other small studies suggest potential benefit in patients with impaired glucose tolerance or type 2 diabetes, but more studies are needed.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

- Cancer
Although animal studies suggest some benefit, no such studies have been done in humans.
- Antifungal

Lab studies suggest that oyster mushroom has antifungal activity.

- High fat levels in the blood

Although animal studies suggest benefit, a clinical trial in HIV patients with high cholesterol levels caused by antiretroviral treatment did not.

- Diabetes

Oyster mushroom may lower blood sugar levels and increase insulin levels, but more studies are needed to confirm these effects.

What are the side effects?

Case reports

- Occupational asthma, widespread lung inflammation, severe allergic reaction: Following exposure to oyster mushroom spores.
- Nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, and chest pain: In a 31-year old woman, 2 hours after eating oyster mushrooms. An allergy test and complete resolution after treatment confirmed this as the source of her reactions.

What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

- You are allergic to mushrooms.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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