

Mushrooms Help to Keep the Cognitive Decline at Bay

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Mushrooms reduce the chances of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) usually seen among the elderly. The stage between the cognitive decline of healthy aging and the more severe decline of dementia is termed as MCI. Senior citizens afflicted with MCI often have some form of memory loss and may also be a deficit on other cognitive function such as language, attention and visuospatial abilities. A six-year study conducted on 600 elderly Chinese people living in Singapore, from 2011 to 2017 was recently published online in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*. After extensive interviews on demographic information, medical history, psychological factors, and dietary habits, in addition to other vital tests, the researchers concluded that a compound called ergothioneine (ET) is believed to be the reason for the reduced prevalence of MCI among the participants of the study. ET is a unique antioxidant and anti-inflammatory which humans are unable to synthesize on their own. However, it can be obtained

through dietary supplements. Mushroom is a natural source of ergothioneine (ET) and hence contribute to healthier cognitive functions. The study was carried out with the support of the Life Sciences Institute and the Mind Science Centre at NUS, as well as the Singapore Ministry of Health's National Medical Research Council.

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