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Health benefits of edible macro fungi *Trametes versicolor*

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From time immemorial, mushrooms have been valued by humankind as a culinary wonder and folk medicine in oriental practice. The chief medicinal uses of mushrooms discovered so far are as anti-oxidant, anti-diabetic, hypo-cholesterolemic, anti-tumor, anti-cancer, immune-modulatory, anti-allergic, nephron-protective, and anti-microbial agents. One of the most common mushrooms is *Trametes versicolor* (Coriolus), a fungus that grows in wooded temperate zones year round on tree trunks, stumps, dead logs, and branches. In traditional oriental medicine, Coriolus was dried and ground into a tea where the observed healing properties prompted Chinese and Japanese scientists to begin clinical research on the use of this mushroom in clinical practice. The most common commercial extracts include Poly Saccharopeptide Krestin (PSK), the Japanese version, and poly-saccharopeptide PSP, the Chinese version. Both are extracted from Coriolus mycelia. Numerous other nutraceutical extract preparations are available worldwide in forms such as tablets, syrups, capsules, food additives and traditional forms such as teas. The present review updates the recent findings on the pharmacologically active compounds, their anti-tumor potential and underlying mechanism of biological action in order to raise awareness for further investigations to develop cancer therapeutics from mushrooms. The mounting evidences from various research groups across the globe, regarding anti-tumor application of mushroom extracts unarguably make it a fast-track research area worth mass attention.

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