Trends in Food Science & Technology

Volume 18, Issue 1, January 2007, Pages 4-19

Review

Antitumor polysaccharides from mushrooms: a review on their isolation process, structural characteristics and antitumor activity

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2006.07.013

Mushrooms have been valued as edible and medicinal resources, and antitumor substances have been identified in many mushroom species. Polysaccharides are the best known and most potent mushroom-derived substances with antitumor and immunomodulating properties. Although the isolation process, structural characterization and antitumor activity of mushroom polysaccharides have been extensively investigated in the past three decades, the relationship between the antitumor activity and the chemical composition as well as the high order structure of their active components is still not well established. These studies are still in progress in many laboratories, and the role of polysaccharides as antitumor agent is especially under intense debate. The purpose of the present review is to summarize the available

information, and to reflect the current status of this research area with a view for future direction.

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