

International Journal of Medicinal Mushrooms: Celebrating Seven Years

William Begell & Solomon P. Wasser

Begell House, Inc., 145 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, USA; and Institute of Evolution, University of Haifa, Mt. Carmel, Haifa 31905, Israel

Since ancient times mushrooms have been used throughout the world in folk medicine. Mushrooms are being evaluated for their nutritional value and acceptability, as well as their pharmacological properties. They are a nutritionally functional food and a source of physiologically beneficial and noninvasive medicine. Some of the most recently isolated and identified substances originating in mushrooms have been shown to be promising immunomodulators and have demonstrated significant antitumor, cardiovascular, antiviral, antibacterial, antiparasitic, hepatoprotective, and antidiabetic activities. For almost 40 years, medicinal mushrooms have been intensively investigated for medicinal effects in *in vitro* and *in vivo* models, and many new antitumor and immunomodulating polysaccharides have been identified and put into practical use. The information published in recent years is helpful in exploring and understanding the rich traditions of medicinal mushrooms in Eastern and Western cultures and medicine. Cultivation and development of edible and medicinal mushrooms can positively generate equitable economic growth and have already had an impact at national and regional levels.

Modern science's study of medicinal mushrooms

has quickly developed during the last two decades. Publications devoted specifically to the study of medicinal mushrooms have increased geometrically. Articles appear in hundreds of biological, mycological, botanical, microbiological, forest, agricultural, food, biochemical, chemical, medical, pharmacological, and ethnobiological journals, among others.

In view of the great interest in medicinal mushrooms and the absence of a specialized journal in the field, a special journal dedicated to medicinal mushrooms, known as the *International Journal of Medicinal Mushrooms* (IJMM), was established in 1999 by Begell House, Inc. (USA) (www.begellhouse.com).

The IJMM was specifically created to help scientists all over the world share the research, information, and new techniques that might promote experimental progress in the field of mushrooms. It is a unique journal and provides a forum for healthcare professionals and research scientists to use as an international tool for education. The IJMM publishes original research articles and critical reviews on the following aspects of medicinal mushrooms: systematics, taxonomy, tissue cultures, culture collection, cultivation, biotechnology, me-

dicinal macromycetes engineering, biochemistry, chemistry, physiology, secondary metabolism, genetics, pharmacology, medicinal value, therapeutic effects, currently recognized biomedical components (and their functions), general characteristics of medicinal uses of medicinal mushrooms, and commercially useful medicinal mushrooms and their products.

The Editorial Board includes 28 famous scientists from all over the world representing 16 countries in Europe, Asia, and North and Central America. The reviewing process takes approximately six to nine months until publication. Upon receiving an article from a researcher, the Editorial Board sends this article to three reviewers. The author receives comments and suggestions and then makes the necessary adjustments for publication.

The IJMM is published quarterly and highlights new perspectives in the field of mycology and medicine. Further identification of the components responsible for health-benefiting activity has not been

completely identified yet. The information presented in this journal is helpful in exploring and understanding the rich traditions of medicinal mushrooms in Eastern and Western cultures and helps to expand up-to-date knowledge of an ever increasing, rapidly developing field.

During the past seven years the IJMM has published 540 articles, including approximately 270 abstracts of the First (Kiev, Ukraine, 2001) and Third (Port Townsend, Washington, 2005) International Medicinal Mushrooms Conferences. The IJMM published articles from authors from 47 countries: North America (Canada, USA, and Mexico); South America (Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia); Asia (R.P. China, Japan, Israel, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Taiwan); Africa (Nigeria, Namibia, South Africa); New Zealand and Australia; and 24 European countries.

The IJMM is indexed in the BIOSIS Database, International Pharmaceutical Abstracts, and Elsevier's Bibliographic Databases.