



Fresh. Simple. Good.

## Health Sheet

*So, your concern is...*

### Diverticular Disease

If you are like many of us, you don't get quite as much fibre in your diet as you should. The diagnosis of diverticulosis is becoming much more common, since a low-fibre diet is the most likely cause. Diverticulosis means having diverticula without any symptoms. Diverticula are small pouches or sacs in the wall of the colon (large intestine). The pouches form when pressure inside the colon builds, usually because of constipation.<sup>1</sup>

When these pouches are inflamed or infected it can cause pain and tenderness in the lower abdomen. Other symptoms are fever and diarrhea.<sup>2</sup> This is called diverticulitis. Diverticulitis can lead to complications such as bleeding, infections, tears or blockages in the bowel. Treatment is very important and usually consists of a short hospital stay, antibiotics and a liquid diet to give the bowel a rest. In severe cases, surgery may be needed to remove the infected part of the colon.\*

So what can be done to lower the chances of diverticula becoming inflamed or infected? The first line of defense is a high-fibre diet and lots of fluids. Aim for 38 grams of fibre per day for men and 25 grams per day for women.<sup>3</sup> Fluids will help the fibre to work and to prevent constipation. Have at least 6-8 cups of water every day.

As they do contain some fibre and have a high water content, fresh mushrooms can be part of a healthy diet to help prevent diverticulosis.

#### ***Fresh Mushrooms Can Help!***

##### Fill up on Fibre

- The type of fibre found in fruit and vegetables in particular may prevent diverticula from forming.<sup>4</sup>
- Aim for 7-10 servings a day of fruit and vegetables to help you get enough fibre.<sup>5</sup>

##### Health Helpers

- Beta-glucans, a type of carbohydrate found in mushrooms, has potential anti-inflammatory activity, which may help protect the body against disease.<sup>6</sup>
- Fresh mushrooms contain significant levels of l-ergothioneine, which acts as an antioxidant.<sup>7</sup> It is present in both raw and cooked mushrooms.<sup>8</sup>

### Watch the Weight

- Being at a healthy weight is a smart overall strategy for disease prevention and wellbeing.
- Fresh mushrooms are a perfect choice for weight management, since they have high water content, are low in fat and contain some fibre: - three factors that will help you feel full with fewer calories. That means less room for calorie-laden foods.

### ***Mushrooms Make a Difference***<sup>9</sup>

- Add ½ cup white button mushrooms to omelets and frittatas  
Benefit: *an extra one (1) gram of fibre*
- Add great flavor to pasta sauces, rice dishes and casseroles with 1 cup sliced portabella mushrooms  
Benefit: *an extra two (2) grams of fibre*
- Toss ½ cup sliced shiitake mushrooms into stir-fries  
Benefit: *an extra four (4) grams of fibre*

### ***Make it with Mushrooms:***

- Stuffed mushrooms make a handy bite-sized appetizer or can be a hearty main dish. Use small white buttons for appetizers and larger stuffing mushrooms as a main dish. Fill with chopped vegetables, cheese, rice or your favorite combination of flavours. (For recipes visit [www.mushrooms.ca](http://www.mushrooms.ca).)
- Top grilled pork chops or roast chicken with a medley of sautéed fresh mushrooms.
- Beef stroganoff is a classic dish worth revisiting: - a delicious combination of tender meat, onions and mushrooms with a sour cream sauce.
- A cheese and mushroom soufflé is a sophisticated dish perfect for entertaining. Look for recipes in your favourite all-purpose cookbooks.
- Be sure to add chopped fresh crimini or portabella mushrooms the next time you make stuffed peppers.

### ***Recipe Suggestion:***

#### [Mid-Eastern Mushroom and Chick Pea Couscous](#)

*For more mushroom nutrition information, great tips and delicious recipes visit [www.mushrooms.ca](http://www.mushrooms.ca).*

*For more about diverticular diseases visit the National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse at <http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov>, Canadian Society of Intestinal Research (CSIR) at [www.badgut.com](http://www.badgut.com) or Dietitians of Canada at [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca).*

*\* For diet recommendations for acute diverticulitis, please contact your family physician or a registered dietitian immediately.*

Disclaimer: The provided information is not meant to replace the medical counsel of your Doctor. If you have further questions please consult with your Doctor or Registered Dietitian.

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<sup>1</sup> National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse. Diverticulosis and Diverticulitis fact sheet at <http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/diverticulosis/>.

<sup>2</sup> Dietitians of Canada Practice-Based Evidence in Nutrition. Eating Guidelines for Diverticular Disease, updated March 14, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academies, 2002. Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs): Recommended Intakes for Individuals, Macronutrients.

<sup>4</sup> Aldoori WH, Giovannucci EL, Rocket HR, Sampson L, Rimm EB, Willett WC. A prospective study of dietary fiber types and symptomatic diverticular disease in men. *J Nutr* 1998;128(4):714-9.

<sup>5</sup> Dietitians of Canada Practice-Based Evidence in Nutrition. Eating Guidelines for Diverticular Disease, updated March 14, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Pacheco-Sanchez M, Boutin Y, Angers P, Gosselin A and Tweddell RJ. A bioactive (1-3), (1-4)-beta-D-glucan from *Collybia dryophila* and other mushrooms. *Mycologia* 2006;98(2):180-185.

<sup>7</sup> Dubost NJ, Beelman RB, Peterson D and Royse DJ. Identification and Quantification of Ergothioneine in Cultivated Mushrooms by Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectroscopy. *Int J Med Mushr* 2006;8(3):215-222.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 19, 2006 at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/ba/bhnrc/ndl>.