

# Medicinal Mushroom Descriptions

**Warning: Some mushrooms can kill you or make you very ill!**

**Never ever eat a wild mushroom unless it has been absolutely positively identified as to its species.**

e.g. *Agaricus campestris* (edible). *Agaricus xanthoderma* (poisonous)

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**Turkey Tail Mushroom** (*Trametes versicolor*). A polypore

- 1-2 in. semicircular brackets on logs and branches
- brownish silky or colored concentric rings on upper surface white pore surface with very tiny pore size like barely visible pin pricks
- Collect year round or fresh in fall. Common in Minnesota

**Miatake or Hen-of-the-woods Mushroom.** (*Grifola frondosa*). A polypore

- Big cluster of feather like "fronds" at the base of old oaks. Can weigh more than 30 lbs or more. Color grayish brown. No black staining when bruised.
- Fronds: 1 to 3" wide. White pore surface on underside. Pores 1-3 per mm
- A choice edible

**Reishi Mushroom aka Ling Zhi and Varnished Conk** (*Ganoderma lucidum*)

- A polypore
- Dark reddish brown color. Semi-circular with hard glossy upper surface, sometimes with a stem. Present but fairly rare in Minnesota.
- Pore surface white. Very small pores
- Grown commercially. Kits available

**Aritists Conk** (*Ganoderma lucidum*). A polypore

- Inches to 2 feet wide Shelf-like fungus. woody with hard surface
- usually on dead deciduous wood. A perennial
- White pore surface. Tiny pores. Fresh pore surface can be engraved leaving brown lines.

**Tinder Polypore** (*Fomes Fomentarius*). A Polypore

- 1-5 inches wide. hoofed shaped. Commonly on birch
- Hard surface and woody. When cut in half see thin fuzzy brown layer under the hard surface
- pore surface brown or brownish grey

**Split Gill** (*Schizophyllum Commune*) gilled mushroom

- Small usually <1inch on dead wood and branches. Color grey
- Look closely for split gills
- Buy at Hmong markets

**Oyster Mushroom** (*Pleurotus ostreatus* and other *Pleurotus* spp.). Gilled Mushroom

- Color varies: white to tan to grayish blue
- Lateral stem with white gills running down the stem a ways
- Spore print: White
- Sometimes has an anise odor
- Find in Spring and Fall
- Grow at home. Easiest mushroom to cultivate. Grow on straw, wood, paper, etc. Kits available

**Velvet Foot or Winter Mushroom** (*Flamulina velutipes*). Gilled mushroom.

- 1-2 in. diameter. (usually quarter size) brownish yellow cap with stem
- Brownish black velvety fuzz at stem base
- Often coming out from under bark on dead elms. Find spring and fall when it's cool
- **Always do a spore print.** Spore print white. \*There's a **deadly look-like** (*Galerina marginata*) with brown spore print.

**Shiitake** (*Lintinula edodes*). Gilled mushroom

- Buy in supermarkets, coops, Asian markets.
- Grow your own on logs or sawdust blocks. Kits available.

**Chinese White Fungus or Snow Fungus** (*Tremella fuciformis*)

- Grown commercially in Asia.
- Available dried in some Asian markets

**Lions Mane Mushroom aka Monkey Head Mushroom** (*Hericium erinaceus* and other *Hericium* spp.) Toothed mushroom.

- Fruiting body is white. Has long or short teeth depending on species
- Found in Minnesota. Not common.
- Available dried in some Asian markets.
- Grow your own on logs or sawdust block. Kits available

**Chaga** (*Inonotus obliquus*)

- An ugly black tumor-like growth on birch trees
- Outer surface is hard, black and cracked as if charred. Inner part is orangish tan and corky.

**Wood or Ear Fungus** (*Auricularia aricula-judae* or *A. polytrichia*)

- Yes, it looks like an ear. Tan jelly-like, and cartilaginous, clustered on dead or dying branches especially elders.
- Found in Minnesota
- Available dried in Asian markets. Sometimes called "black fungus"

**Please note!** Some medicinal mushrooms can interact with prescription drugs. Check with physician or pharmacist