

Cheilitis due to *Agaricus blazei* Murill mushroom extract

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Contact cheilitis is an inflammatory reaction provoked by the irritant or sensitizing action of chemicals. Many cases are caused by lipsticks or lip salves, but a large number of sub-

stances are believed to cause the condition (1). We present a case of allergic contact cheilitis due to ingestion of extract of *Agaricus blazei* Murill mushrooms.

Case Report

A 60-year-old man presented with a 6-month history of itchy edematous erythema on both lips (Fig. 1). 6 months prior to onset, he had taken *A. blazei* Murill mushroom extract daily for maintenance of good health. He had personally extracted the health food from 2 or 3 dried fruit bodies (Fig. 2) by treatment for 1 hr with hot water. He was clinically diagnosed with chronic cheilitis and treated with topical steroid ointment for several weeks, but without effect.

Patch testing with *A. blazei* Murill mushroom extract (as is) showed a ++ reaction at 72 hr, whereas 6

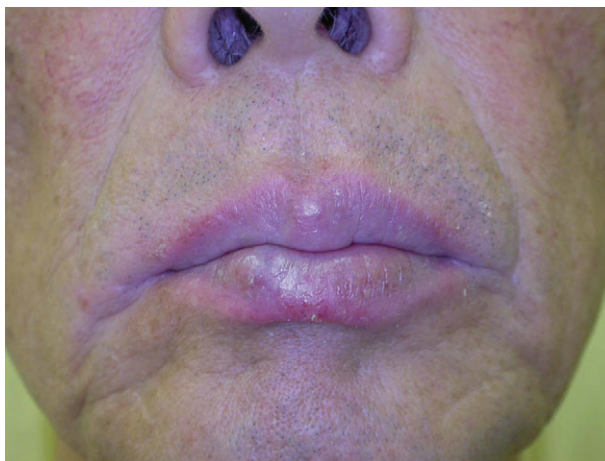


Fig. 1. Edematous erythema with vesiculation of the lips.



Fig. 2. Dried *Agaricus blazei* Murill mushrooms.

controls showed no reaction. Patch testing with our spices series, lip salves, and dentifrices (1% aq.) from the patient were negative. Therefore, allergic contact cheilitis due to *A. blazei* Murill was diagnosed, and complete remission of cheilitis occurred after termination of ingestion of the mushroom extract.

Discussion

Complementary and alternative medicine through the use of health foods is common worldwide (2), and among health foods, the *A. blazei* Murill mushroom is frequently used as a traditional medicine in many countries, including Japan (3). Mushrooms are antigenically rich, but the overall extent of mushroom allergy is unknown (4). The genus *Agaricus* has been reported as a contact sensitizer before (5–8), whereas only 1 case of exudative erythema multiforme from *A. blazei* Murill has been reported (9); moreover, we have found no previous cases of cheilitis from *Agaricus* mushroom extract. Our case suggests that it should be kept in mind that health foods may be a cause of persistent and recalcitrant chronic cheilitis.

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