

## A review on mysterious poisonous mushrooms of Pakistan, unveiling their implications and threats

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### Abstract

Fungi have been fascinating humans for centuries due to their distinct properties and uses. Among them, the poisonous or toxic mushrooms are particularly intriguing and dangerous for human health. This review article provides an overview of poisonous mushrooms, including information on their toxins, risks, signs, and usage. A total of 81 poisonous mushrooms were reported which belongs to 30 families and 46 genera. The most dominant and toxic mushroom species were recorded from family Agaricaceae and Amanitaceae. Some macrofungi are highly toxic and are responsible for deaths such as *Galerina marginata*, *Amanita phalloides* and *Amanita cinis*. These deadly mushrooms have a wide range of unique chemicals like orellanine, muscimol, gyromitrin and ibotenic acid. Rhabdomyolysis, carcinogenicity, renal failure, increase heart rate and respiratory alterations effects are among the outcomes of the toxicity of these poisonous mushrooms. Based on this review, it is concluded that toxicological testing is required to confirm whether mushrooms are safe to eat or use medicinally along with accurate identification to avoid any mishaps. This comprehensive review will also enhance public knowledge about toxic mushrooms and how to prevent from mushroom poisoning.

**Keywords:** Ecology, Macrofungi, Mushroom poisoning, Wild mushroom.

### Introduction

Fungi are a diverse and large group of organisms with more than 5.1 million species (Blackwell, 2011). It can be divided into four phyla: Ascomycota, Basidiomycota, Zygomycota and Chytridiomycota (Webster and Weber, 2007). Macrofungi include puffballs, mushrooms, cup mushrooms and false truffles are distinguished by distinctive spore-like structures (Razaq *et al.*, 2014). Most macrofungi are Ascomycota or Basidiomycota, but some are Zygomycota. Most soil macrofungi are mycorrhizal symbionts, but some are plant pathogens and the abundance of sporocarps depends on climate (Müller *et al.*, 2001). Pakistan has a dry and hot climate near the coast and gradually cools towards the northeastern slopes. It is located in South Asia between 24-37° North Latitude and 61-75° East Longitude. Pakistan borders China to the northeast, Pakistan and India to the east, the Arabian Sea to the south, Iran to the southwest, and Afghanistan to the west and southwest. The area of Pakistan is 796,095 km<sup>2</sup>. The climate changes from tropical to temperate and becomes drier on the south coast. Pakistan has four different seasons; Summer, winter, autumn and spring. The summer rainy season is from June-September, and the winter rainy season is from December-March. Summers are very hot with extreme temperatures ranging from 15 to 35 °C. Then the minimum temperature is 0–20 °C in cold and generally dry winters (Iqbal *et al.*, 2016). In general, the average annual rainfall in Pakistan is less than 500 mm (Salma *et al.*, 2012). Average

annual precipitation generally decreases from northeast to southwest, and humidity can reach 57% (Champion *et al.*, 1968). Pakistan has a wide range of geographical diversity due to significant differences in climate and topography, including arid and tropical deserts in Baluchistan province, humid areas in the northwest, hills and humid areas and lush green valleys in the north (Arif *et al.*, 2012). The northern region of the country is bounded by the Hindu Kush, Himalayan, and Karakoram boundaries, which together constitute about 60% of the land. These are mountainous areas with abundant natural forest resources. Coniferous forests are found between 1000 and 4000 meters above sea level. These forests contain fungi that are important for ecosystem development and energy stability. Fungi are multicellular are eukaryotic organisms that are crucial components of ecosystems nutrients cycle. Many species of invertebrate and vertebrates including humans, eat the fruiting bodies of fungi, or sporocarps (Bajwa *et al.*, 1999 a, b; Arora, 2001). Poisonous mushrooms such as *Amanita subjunquilea*, *Amanita pallidorosea*, *Amanitin fuliginea*, *Amanita excialis* and *Amanitin rimosa* are known for their high toxicity (Zhao *et al.*, 2023). The genus *Amanita* includes approximately 600 species of mushrooms known worldwide. Most cases of mushroom poisoning result from consuming poisonous mushrooms of the genus *Amanita*. These mushrooms belong to the order Agaricales and the family Amanitaceae (Diaz, 2018). The objectives of the current review are: 1) To explore and identify the

taxonomic classification of the species of poisonous mushrooms documented in Pakistan. 2) To analyze the biochemical consumption and toxicological effects of identified poisonous mushroom, focusing on symptoms, treatment options and mortality rates. 3) To analyze the ecological and economic threats posed by poisonous mushrooms to human health, agriculture, and biodiversity conservation in Pakistan.

### Ecology and substrates of mushrooms

Macrofungi are truffles, gill and cup mushrooms. According to their ecological relationships, macrofungi can be divided into parasitic, symbiotic (mycorrhizal) and saprophytic species. Macrofungi are common in nature and indicate the importance of rainfall patterns during the rainy season for mushroom phenology. According to Tibpromma *et al.* (2018), fungi can act as dispersants, live as endophytes in plant tissues and play an important role in nutrient cycling, attack on crops as pathogens or associated with roots as a mycorrhizal arbuscular fungus (Javaid and Khan, 2019). According to Cairney and Meharg (2002), ectomycorrhizal and saprotrophic fungi are important for nutrient cycling and degradation. Trees represent the typical flora of habitats, where soil fungi influence humidity, control soil temperature and feed on underground plants (Gomoryova *et al.*, 2013). Fungi are found in soil (terrestrial), dead leaves (follicolous), wood (lignicolous), decay (coprophilous), decay and organic matter. Fruiting of mushrooms is influenced by various environmental factors.

### Factors effecting the growth of mushroom

Vegetation structure and plant species composition vary along with environmental gradients, and this variation affects the macrofungal community and the presence of species associated with woody plants. Macromycetes richness and distribution patterns have been related to the composition and structure of the trees community in temperate and tropical habitats (Ferrer and Gilbert, 2003), whereas, in the Mediterranean region, ecological studies have related fungal diversity and distribution to plant diversity (Richard *et al.*, 2004).

Precipitation and temperature have significant effects on the phenology, productivity and diversity of fungi. According to Becker (1956), fruiting was promoted by the alternating of dry and rainy periods. Studies have identified several variables that influence species diversity (Raatikainen *et al.*, 2007). Pykal *et al.* (2001) showed that long history of grazing, management, environmental conditions, habitat heterogeneity and soil pH influence species diversity. Today one of the biggest challenges is understanding how climate change affects the distribution and fruiting of fungi. A significant contemporary difficulty to find out how climatic

variation affects the distribution and fruiting of fungi. According to Bujakewicz (1969), too much water prevents soil species (mycorrhizal fungi, humus, and litter saprotrophs) from fruiting. After examining the impact of rainfall and soil temperature on the presence of carpophores in conifer woods from June-December, Thoen (1976) reached to the same conclusion.

The production and diversity of mushrooms are significantly impacted by climate change, which is the most important variable, along with precipitation, temperature and their interactions (Taye *et al.*, 2016). Soil moisture is influenced by the interaction of these variables, and it can be said that this variable serves as an integral drivers of mushrooms fruit development, considering a variety of processes that lead to a particular level of mushroom productivity. Since warm, humid conditions are the most favorable for fungal fruiting, while production has decreased and been delayed in drier environments, current trends in temperature rise brought on by climate change are having been found to boost production and enhance the development of mushrooms in wet temperate regions (Boddy *et al.*, 2014). These modifications would probably make forested ecosystems more susceptible to extreme dryness and drought, which would eventually negatively impact on the growth of mushrooms (Büntgen *et al.*, 2015). Various threats that can also affect the growth, health and survival of fungi. Some mushrooms are poisonous and dangerous even in very small quantities.

### Poisonous mushrooms

Mushroom poisoning refers to the serious and often fatal consequences of various toxins found in certain types of mushrooms. The severity of mushroom poisoning depends on the type of mushroom eaten, early diagnosis and appropriate treatment (Pajoumand *et al.*, 2005). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and World Health Organization more than 41,000 people died from mushrooms poisoning in 2008, and 0.346 million deaths since 2004, respectively (Warner *et al.*, 2011). In 1998, 1675 cases of mycotoxin poisoning were reported in France, and it is estimated that 8,000 to 10,000 cases have been reported (Jo *et al.*, 2014).

### Role of poisonous mushrooms in humans and animal causalities

There are some poisonous mushrooms that threaten public health. Deaths from mushroom poisoning are increasing worldwide; more than 90% of deaths are attributed to the consumption of species containing amatoxin (Giannini *et al.*, 2007). Many toxins have been well described in the literature, including amatoxin, which causes kidney and liver damage, and orellanine, a nephrotoxic toxin (Qi *et al.*, 2000). Some species are used for food and

medicine because of their pharmacologically active compounds. Moreover, mushrooms have been used for their medicinal substances since ancient times (Miyaji *et al.*, 2001). However, some pharmaceutical compounds have been found to be toxic. Of these each species of poisonous mushrooms, only 70-80 species are deadly. However, some types of poisonous mushrooms are morphologically similar like edible mushrooms (Nieminen *et al.*, 2006). Accidentally digesting poisonous mushrooms can cause injury or illness (Nordt *et al.*, 2000). It has been reported in the literature that high doses of *Amanita phalloides* can cause suicidal behavior (Hruby *et al.*, 1983). According to Mao (2006), almost a thousand species of these diverse macrofungi are regarded as toxic mushrooms. Six categories belong to the symptoms resulting from poisonous mushrooms including harmful to nerves, cytotoxic, 3) metabolic, encompassing endocrine and associated toxicities. According to White *et al.* (2019), there are several adverse effects, including gastrointestinal irritation.

#### Cytotoxic mushrooms

The liver and kidneys are the primary organs targeted by cytotoxic mushrooms. Aminohexadienoic acid, orellanine, and amanitin are poisons that cause harm to the liver and kidneys. The majority of the species that produce these toxins belong to the *Amanita Pers.* and *Cortinarius (Pers.)* Gray genera (Karlson-Stiber and Persson, 2003).

#### Neurotoxic mushrooms

Macrofungi that produce neuroexcitatory effects are neurotoxic mushrooms. Isoxazoles, muscarines, and psilocybins are known poisons. Most of the mushrooms that produce these toxins are Agaricales, which includes *Gymnopilus*, *Amanita*, *Clitocybe*, *Inocybe*, and *Psilocybe*. Additionally, several Pezizales mushrooms, like *Morchella* spp., have been shown to cause neurotoxic syndrome; however, the specific toxins causing this condition are still unclear.

#### Myotoxic mushroom

Myotoxic mushrooms, which primarily come from *Russula* and *Tricholoma*, are strongly linked to rhabdomyolysis symptoms. *Tricholoma equestre* (L.) P. Kumm, *Russula subnigricans* Hongo and *T. terreum* (Schaeff.) P. Kumm are the common species that have been reported.

#### Metabolic/endocrine and related toxicity mushroom

Several deadly mushrooms were included in this large group of mushrooms that has been collected for convenience, even though they rarely share clinical characteristics. As an example, disulfiram-like mushrooms, which produce symptoms similar to disulfiram, are linked to alcohol

intake later on (after consuming mushrooms). Most of the related species come from *Ampulloclitocybe*, *Coprinus* and *Coprinopsis*.

#### Gastrointestinal irritant mushrooms

*Chlorophyllum*, *Agaricus*, *Gomphus*, *Hebeloma*, *Entoloma*, *Rubroboletus*, *Omphalotus*, *Sutorius*, and other mushroom genera are among those that might result in gastrointestinal poisoning. According to Rumack and Spoerke (1994), the specific toxins responsible for these gastrointestinal side effects are unidentified. Since the *Agaricus* species in sections *Hondenses* and *Xanthodermatei* possess toxic phenolic chemicals that can result in typical gastrointestinal symptoms, they have been classified as poisonous. Some mushrooms in this genus might produce gastrointestinal symptoms such as cramps or soreness in the abdomen, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. A common fungus that produces gastrointestinal poisoning is *Chlorophyllum molybdites*. The majority of fatal poisonings are linked to myotoxic and cytotoxic poisonous mushrooms. The number of fatalities from mushroom poisoning each year is unknown, although it is estimated to be between 50 and 100 (Dadpour *et al.*, 2017). According to the National Poison Data System (NPDS), 133700 cases (7248 per year) of fungal infections were reported between 1999 and 2016 (Brandenburg and Ward, 2018). Since many species in this order produce fleshy fruiting bodies, the fungus *Boletales*, *Agaricales*, *Russulales* (*Basidiomycota*) and *Pezizales* (*Ascomycota*) are the primary hosts of poisonous mushroom species (Wu *et al.*, 2019). The poisonous species are largely from the order *Agaricales*, such as the *Amanita* mushroom: *Amanita bisporigera* G.F. Atk. and the allied *Amanita phalloides* Vaill. Fr., *Lepiota brunneoincarnata* Chodat & Martin and *Galerina marginata* (Batsch) Kuhner. *Amanita* species, considered the most toxic mushroom, produces 90% of mushroom poisoning cases (Chen *et al.*, 2014). One of the most toxic species is the deadly specie *Amanita phalloides*, which has killed thousands of people throughout history and is among the ten most poisonous fungi in the world (Hyde *et al.*, 2018). Some species are described as dangerous to health and poisonous, while some mushroom species with beneficial properties also contain toxic substances (Nieminen *et al.*, 2006). The ingestion of fungi containing toxins is unintentional and is often the result of misidentification of the species (Flesch *et al.*, 2004). This unintentional incident occurred due to a lack of information about poisonous mushrooms, including information about their potential toxicity. It is important to characterize the toxicological profile of mushroom species before utilizing for human consumption.

#### Incidents cases of poisonous mushroom species from Pakistan

Even though they are a tasty frequent food source, deadly mushrooms can cause serious disease and even death if accidentally consumed, especially in rural areas. Incorrect identification of harmful species is the main cause of incidental consumption of toxic mushrooms. There have been reports of 18 cases from Pakistan, of which 15 were older than five years old, and the number of female patients was twice more than male patients. Three individuals suffered kidney damage and fifteen patients suffered liver failure. 13 patients passed away (Jan *et al.*, 2008). Vomiting (100%), diarrhea (100%), with signs of moderate to severe dehydration, and indigestion (83.3%) were the most reported symptoms. Hepatic involvement was observed in 15 (83.3%) cases, and hepatic encephalopathy developed in 50% of these cases. After 48 hours, symptoms of liver damage started to appear in most of these cases. In 4 patients (22.3%), renal failure was noted. In Puran tehsil Shangla's Mir Kanai Chawga district, two brothers died after consuming toxic mushrooms. The dead children have been named Wajiha Ishaq, two years old, and Fajar Ishaq, four years old, who were the daughters of Mohammad Ishaq. Locals people says that both children passed away during treatment.

#### Reported case study from other countries

Euripides was the first to report mushroom poisoning in 430 BC. when he told the story of the deaths of his wife and three children after eating mushrooms. There is almost universal agreement that it is difficult to definitively distinguish between poisonous and non-toxic mushrooms. Mushroom poisoning constitutes an important part of plant toxicity in Turkey, in which only 20-25% of mushrooms have been named and 3% of them are poisonous (Gonmori *et al.*, 2003). Previous experiences and observations allow us to distinguish between poisonous and non-poisonous mushrooms (Lancet *et al.*, 1980). In addition to rural areas, mushroom picking is also a habit in Istanbul among villagers who have moved to cities and settled in nearby forests (Oztekın-Mat *et al.*, 1998). From four years, 1994–1998, in Sivas, Turkey, mushroom poisoning accounted for 10.9% of the different types of poisoning analyzed (Alagözülü *et al.*, 2002). However, these cases have not been analyzed toxicologically. The story of a family living in a village in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, India, consisting of a young couple with a one-year-old child, middle-aged parents and a brother. Except for the deceased's husband and child, all family members ate mushrooms collected from the nearby Mäkinen area. Most of the reported cases are accidental, as its use in homicide should not be considered, due to its high toxicity and easy availability. After 10–12 hours, abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea appeared. When the entire family experienced stomach wounds after eating wild mushrooms, they all went to primary care and

were referred to a regional hospital where they received symptomatic treatment for food poisoning.

#### Medicinal benefits of poisonous mushroom

While many fungi, including *M. giganteus* species, have been found to be effective against yeasts and bacteria (Kalvoncu *et al.*, 2010), other fungi, including *Amanita smithiana*, *Gymnopilus marginatus*, *Gymnopilus venenate*, *Lepiota josserrandii*, *Lepiota helveola*, and *Lepiota castanea*, appear to be toxic and contain harmful toxins (West *et al.*, 2009). The toxicity of *Cortinarius speciocissimus* has been attributed to the toxic chemical mineral, which caused irreversible damage to the kidneys (Munstermann *et al.*, 2002). *Amanita phalloides* is considered a life-threatening poison causing acute organ failure, while phalloysin isolated from *Amanita phalloides* has been shown to be a hemolytic toxin (Erguven *et al.*, 2007). In a previous study conducted in Swat (Pakistan), amatoxin was the major toxic compound in mushrooms from the Swat region (Pakistan) and caused gastrointestinal disorders, liver and kidney failure (Chandra and Perkaysth, 1977). Mushrooms contain polysaccharides. Polysaccharides can be used as immunomodulatory, anticancer, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antidiabetic and antioxidant agents (Elsayed *et al.*, 2014). Many species of mushrooms can have medicinal properties, with *Ganoderma*, the king of medicinal mushrooms, and *Lentinula* being the most important genera. *Lentinula edodes* (shiitake) and *Grifola frondosa* (maitake) have a history of medicinal use in different regions of Asia. Studies with mushrooms have shown potential cardiovascular, antitumor, antiviral, antibacterial, antiparasitic, anti-inflammatory, hepatoprotective and antidiabetic effects (Lentinan, 2009).

#### Understanding the toxicity of poisonous mushrooms

According to Wu *et al.* (2019), most species in the orders Agaricales, Boletales, Russulales (Basidiomycota), and Pezizales (Ascomycota) are responsible for most poisonous mushroom species. *Lepiota brunneoincarnata* Chodat & Martin, *Amanita bisporigera* G.F. Atk. and *Amanita phalloides* Vaill. Fr., and *Galerina Marginata* (Batsch) Kühner are the main providers of lethal species, including those that produce amanitin. Ninety percent of fatal mushroom poisonings are caused by *Amanita* species, which are thought to be the most poisonous mushrooms (Chen *et al.*, 2014). Depending on the target organ and the period of appearance, 14 symptoms were found in (Diaz, 2005). Recent research has classified mushroom poisoning into six primary classes based on the main clinical features: Neurotoxic, cytotoxic, myotoxic (rhabdomyolysis), metabolic (including endocrine toxicity and associated toxicities), gastrointestinal

irritant, and miscellaneous mushroom side effects. Among the six primary groupings, 14 recognized and 6 unknown symptoms connected to toxins were discovered (White *et al.*, 2019). The signs of mushroom poisoning include twenty-one. According to Bas (1969), amanita mushrooms belong to the family Amanitaceae, order Agaricales, order Agaricomycetes. Species of the genus Amanita are widespread throughout the world and easy to identify. This plant is endemic to deciduous and deciduous forests of the central and northern Arctic regions, including the Indian Hemisphere, the Mediterranean, and Central America. There are approximately 1000 species of Agaricales worldwide. About 100 species in this genus are considered poisonous and about 50 species are edible. *Amanita muscaria* forms ectomycorrhizal symbiotic associations with various hosts of the Betulaceae, Pinaceae, Rosaceae families, although it is most often associated with representative trees of the Betula and Pinus genera (Dunk *et al.*, 2011). The main toxins found in *Amanita muscaria* are muscarinic acid, ibotenic acid, muscimol and muscazone (Eugster and Takemoto, 1967). Toxins found in the genus Amanita belong to the Phallotoxin family, which includes phalloin, phalloidin, phallacin, phallacidin, phallacin and phallacin. Virotxin is also present in this genus and is closely related to phallotoxins (Wong *et al.*, 2006). Only a minority of patients require an emergency liver transplant (Escudíe *et al.*, 2007). Species of the genus Clitocybe also cause muscarinic syndrome. The species *Clitocybe dealbata*, *Clitocybe rivulosa*, *Clitocybe candicans*, *Clitocybe cerussata* and *Clitocybe phyllophilaare* are described in the literature as poisonous mushrooms due to the presence of muscarine in their chemical composition (Mas *et al.*, 2005).

### Impacts of poisonous mushrooms

In addition, many fungi can produce toxins that can contaminate our food and the environment. Many mycotoxin-producing fungi produce aflatoxins and trichothecenes, which cause various adverse health effects. About 4% of the world's population and 70% of young adults in geographic areas are allergic to mushrooms (Denning, 2014). Furthermore, more than 100 mushrooms are highly poisonous to humans, and these deadly mushrooms kill hundreds of people every year due to accidental consumption (Li *et al.*, 2021). In total, the number of mushroom species that directly or indirectly threaten humans is approximately 10% of the currently known mushroom species. A three-year (1999–2002) global survey commissioned by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) found that people in more than 80 countries routinely collect wild mushrooms as a source of food, medicine and income for rural residents. According to the US National Poison Data System

(NPDS), 133,700 cases of mushroom poisoning (7,428 per year) were reported between 1999 and 2016, of which 47,220 (2,623 per year) and 52 (2,628 per year) required hospital treatment 2.5/years of deaths (Brandenburg *et al.*, 2018). The Basidiomycota outline served as the basis for the taxonomic data for each species (He *et al.*, 2019). Index Fungorum were used to verify the common synonymy names. Each species' symptoms were categorized using the most recent clinical categorization for mushroom poisoning (White *et al.*, 2019). We provide a list of dangerous mushrooms with details on taxonomy and symptoms, based on reports of deadly mushrooms from Pakistan (Table 1 & 2). We examined the information provided for each species individually with relevant references to better understand the toxicity of each species.

### Methodological approaches

The published literature data has been collected from online databases such as Google Scholar, Web Sciences, PubMed, Science Hub, Reseachgate and Science direct, as well as local newspapers and Pakistan-specific databases such as PubMedNet. A comprehensive literature study was conducted until August 2023. This database was chosen to cover all national and international literature. We used various terms and keywords such as wild poisonous mushrooms of Pakistan, ecology, medicinal benefits, uses, and ethno mycology. Meeting minutes and data in languages other than English were excluded. Those articles and studies were selected that were published in English or have an English abstract. Also highlighted were resources focusing on wild poisonous mushrooms found in the Pakistani regions.

### Data collection and analysis

Data was collected from selected publications and articles using a standard methodological approach. The collected data includes scientific names, family name, disorders and disease duration time. Data obtained from selected sources were analyzed descriptively.

### Ethical consideration and quality assessment

Ethical issues play an important role at every stage of the evaluation process. Communities that use these mushrooms possess indigenous knowledge and intellectual property rights are recognized and respected. The formal quality of the studies was not assessed as the review focused on ethnobotanical and ethnomycological aspects rather than clinical studies or research. However, in mycological and ethnobotanical research, preference is given to strong and reliable sources of verification.

### Non-edible mushrooms of Pakistan

Almost 81 mushrooms belonging to 30 families and 46 genera were reported from Pakistan.

All these mushroom species were toxic and non-edible (Table 3). The dominant families of mushroom species were Agaricaceae (12) followed by Amanitaceae (10), Marasmiaceae (7), Polyporaceae (7), Pleurotaceae (4), Strophariaceae (3), Inocybaceae (1), Hygrophoraceae (1), Geastraceae (2), Loranthaceae (1), Pasthyrellaceae (4), Mycenaceae (1), Phallaceae (1), Crepidotaceae (1), Gomphaceae (1), Pluteaceae (1), Ganodermataceae (3), Bolbitiaceae (2), Calostomataceae (1), Xylariaceae (1), Russulaceae (7), Xanthomonadaceae (1), Schizophyllaceae (1), Tremellaceae (1), Discinaceae (1), Tricholomataceae (2), Rhinesuchidae (1), Sclerodermataceae (1), and Fomitopsidaceae (1) (Table 4).

In many developing mushroom consuming countries such as Pakistan, many poisoning cases are reported annually, mainly due to lack of knowledge and misidentification of species. These species contain dangerous toxins that can cause death depending on the symptoms and amount consumed. It is difficult to avoid accidental consumption of mushrooms, especially in countries where consumption of wild species is common. The most reported symptoms are vomiting, diarrhea and diarrhoea. Gastrointestinal disorders with moderate to severe dehydration and abdominal pain. In most of these cases, symptoms of diabetes and liver-related symptoms were noted. In rare cases, skin problems, allergies, swelling, nausea and heart disease have also been reported.

## Conclusion

A review of the literature indicates that more efforts are needed to reduce mortality from highly toxic poisonings. All patients who appear with acute food poisoning should be tested for the possibility of having mushroom poisoning, especially if they are a family group. Gastric washing should be performed as soon as there is any type of indication. Injectable Silymarin, which should be accessible for improved results. In patients with moderate to severe amanitin poisoning, intensive combined therapy is quite effective in improving their condition; hence, hemodialysis is recommended in these extreme cases of mushroom poisoning. Establishing a central poison control center could enable faster identification of poisonous mushrooms. The media should warn the public about eating unknown mushrooms.

## Contribution of authors

HG collected data, SZ, FM, SM and NB analyzed data, wrote and reviewed the initial manuscript. All the authors approved the final submission of this manuscript.

## Conflict of interest

The author of this work declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Table 1:** Disorders caused by poisonous mushrooms of Pakistan.

S. No	Botanical Name	Disorders	References
1	<i>Agaricus</i> sp.	Heart disease and diabetes	Diamandis <i>et al.</i> (2008)
2	<i>Agaricus subrutilescens</i>	Unpleasant gastric disorders	Diamandis <i>et al.</i> (2008)
3	<i>Agrocybe retigera</i>	Neuroinflammation	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
4	<i>Amanita cinis</i>	Cancer, obesity and hypertension	Keskin <i>et al.</i> (2022)
5	<i>Amanita fulva</i>	Gastrointestinal	Kotowski (2016)
6	<i>Amanita hemibapha</i>	Liver failure	Taylor <i>et al.</i> (2019)
7	<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Gastrointestinal distress, liver failure/dizziness and diarrhoea	Taylor <i>et al.</i> (2019)
8	<i>Amanita nigra</i>	Chronic pain, and gastroesophageal reflux	Khalid (2022)
9	<i>Amanita ovoidea</i>	Organ damage in the human body	Biagi <i>et al.</i> (2014)
10	<i>Amanita pallidorozea</i>	Typical photosensitive dermatitis	Li <i>et al.</i> (2023)
11	<i>Amanita phalloides</i>	Gastrointestinal disorders	Garcia <i>et al.</i> (2015)
12	<i>Amanita virosa</i>	Violent with vomiting and intense, watery diarrhea	Tavassoli <i>et al.</i> (2019)
13	<i>Bolbitius titubans</i>	Inflammation of the internal wall of the heart	Cagli <i>et al.</i> (2019)
14	<i>Calostoma insignis</i>	Cancer and gastroduodenal diseases	Fui <i>et al.</i> (2018)
15	<i>Chlorophyllum hortense</i>	Stomach irritation and vomiting	Berger <i>et al.</i> (2005)
16	<i>Chlorophyllum molybdites</i>	Diarrhea	Benjamin <i>et al.</i> (1995)
17	<i>Clitocybe fragrans</i>	Abdominal pains	Ojanperä <i>et al.</i> (2008)
18	<i>Coprinellus micaceus</i>	Causing serious diseases such as heart and blood pressure	Ojanperä <i>et al.</i> (2008)

19	<i>Coprinopsis picacea</i>	Severe nausea, vomiting and heart palpitations	Zeb <i>et al.</i> (2023)
20	<i>Coprinopsis variegata</i>	Cause allergy	Zeb <i>et al.</i> (2023)
21	<i>Coprinus cofeicola</i>	Vomiting and nausea	Nowakowski <i>et al.</i> (2020)
22	<i>Cyclocybe parasitica</i>	Like nausea and vomiting	Badshah <i>et al.</i> (2021)
23	<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>	Liver-related problems, inflammations and various cancers	Kalitikha <i>et al.</i> (2023).
24	<i>Fomitopsis pinicola</i>	Headaches, nausea and liver disease	Grienke <i>et al.</i> (2014)
25	<i>Ganoderma lucidum</i>	Liver disease/hepatitis and neuropathies	Li <i>et al.</i> (2021)
26	<i>Gastrum triplex</i>	Defective cardiac function and cardio-toxicity/ liver disorders	De Leon <i>et al.</i> (2020)
27	<i>Ganoderma adspersum</i>	Liver disease	Sułkowska <i>et al.</i> (2023)
28	<i>Ganoderma applanatum</i>	Liver damage	Ghareeb <i>et al.</i> (2021)
29	<i>Gastrum saccatum</i>	Human cervical cancer	Yasin <i>et al.</i> (2019)
30	<i>Gyromitra esculenta</i>	Abdominal pain, muscle cramps and faintness	Arlukowicz <i>et al.</i> (2019)
31	<i>Helvella elastica</i>	Hydrologic alterations and livestock activity	Britting <i>et al.</i> (2016)
32	<i>Hygrocybe miniata</i>	Anaemia	Perkins <i>et al.</i> (1994)
33	<i>Inocybe pallida</i>	Liver necrosis	Dwivedi <i>et al.</i> (1992)
34	<i>Lactarius helvus</i>	Nausea and vomiting	Schmidt <i>et al.</i> (1982)
35	<i>Lepiota magnispora</i>	Nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, diarrhoea, liver failure and death	Wennig <i>et al.</i> (2020)
36	<i>Lactarius torminosus</i>	Fatal gastroenteritis	Widén <i>et al.</i> (1979)
37	<i>Lactarius pubescens</i>	Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, antioxidant and anti-diabetes	Im <i>et al.</i> (2016)
38	<i>Lactifusus piperatus</i>	Cause skin disease	Barron (2003)
39	<i>Lentinula edodes</i>	Sarcomas, myelomas, leukemias and lymphomas	Orywal <i>et al.</i> (2021)
40	<i>Lepiota brunneoincarnata</i>	Gastrointestinal, nausea and vomiting	Varvenne <i>et al.</i> (2015)
41	<i>Lepiota cristata</i>	Gastrointestinal symptoms	Fuller <i>et al.</i> (1986)
42	<i>Lepiota flavoaurantiaca</i>	Liver failure	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
43	<i>Lepiota oreadiformis</i>	Nausea and vomiting	Bresinsky <i>et al.</i> (2004)
44	<i>Leucoagaricus nivalis</i>	Liver, gastrointestinal tract, kidneys, nervous system and immune system	Altunay <i>et al.</i> (2019)
45	<i>Leucopaxillus giganteus</i>	Cause a redox imbalance and toxicity in cancer cells	Dai <i>et al.</i> (2021)
46	<i>Marasmius acerinus</i>	Chronic diarrhea and respiratory failure	Fuhrman <i>et al.</i> (2004)
47	<i>Marasmius rotula</i>	Cardiological problems and obesity	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
48	<i>Marasmius strictipes</i>	Oxidative stress and cancer	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
49	<i>Marasmiellus sp.</i>	Cancers	Daker <i>et al.</i> (2008)
50	<i>Marasmius abruptipes</i>	Deficiency in calories and energy	Suryavanshi (2010)
51	<i>Panaeolus foenicicii</i>	Digestive disturbances	Schenk-Jaeger <i>et al.</i> (2017)
52	<i>Phallus sp</i>	Gastrointestinal disorders	Overbo <i>et al.</i> (2004)
53	<i>Volvariella volvacea</i>	Cancer and hyperlipidaemia diseases	Salit <i>et al.</i> (2010)
54	<i>Coprinus comatus</i>	Caused protein and fat metabolism	Cao <i>et al.</i> (2019)
55	<i>Coprinus xerophilus</i>	Cause skin reactions	Nowakowski <i>et al.</i> (2020)
56	<i>Panaeolus subbalteatus</i>	Cause severe illness and even death	Fay (2024)
57	<i>Panellus mitis</i>	Cause the deterioration of the human body	Najmanova <i>et al.</i> (2022)
58	<i>Pleurotus djamor</i> var. <i>djamor</i>	Human breast cancer	Khalid (2022)
59	<i>Pleurotus giganteus</i>	Neurodegenerative	Phan <i>et al.</i> (2015)
60	<i>Pleurotus ostreatus</i>	Cardio metabolic parameters	Dicks & Ellinger (2020)
61	<i>Pleurotus tuber-regium</i>	Diabetes is a cluster metabolic disorder	Huang <i>et al.</i> (2012)

62	<i>Polyporus alveolaris</i>	Cancer	Kadirvelraj <i>et al.</i> (2011)
63	<i>Russula fragrantissima</i>	Acute liver failure	Li <i>et al.</i> (2021)
64	<i>Russula cinereovinosa</i>	Oxidative stress and cancer	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
65	<i>Rhodocollybia butyracea</i>	Gastroenteric disorders	Větrovský <i>et al.</i> (2013)
66	<i>Russula sanguinaria</i>	Gastrointestinal disorders	Gilardoni <i>et al.</i> (2014)
67	<i>Schizophyllum commune</i>	HIV disease	Rosenthal <i>et al.</i> (1992)
68	<i>Scleroderma bovista</i>	Cause acute liver failure	Li <i>et al.</i> (2021)
69	<i>Spongipellis pachyodon</i>	Diabetes and cardiovascular disorders	Chaudhary <i>et al.</i> (2023).
70	<i>Trametes gibbosa</i>	High blood pressure and urinary tract infection	Sivaprakasam (2011)
71	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Neurodegenerative	Cordaro <i>et al.</i> (2022)
72	<i>Tremella fuciformis</i>	Skin inflammation and carcinogenesis	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
73	<i>Xylaria polymorpha</i>	Cancer and cardiological disorders	Saridogan <i>et al.</i> (2021)
74	<i>Cantharellus floccus</i>	Anti-inflammation	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
75	<i>Crepidotus iqbalii</i>	Cough, influenza, asthma and cancer	Izhar <i>et al.</i> (2021)
76	<i>Pholiota brunnescens</i>	Cause leaf spot diseases	Fukasawa <i>et al.</i> (2021)
77	<i>Russula collina</i>	Hyperlipidaemia and gastroduodenal diseases	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
78	<i>Russula tenuiceps</i>	Acute kidney injury	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
79	<i>Russula umbra</i>	Acute kidney injury	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
80	<i>Tyromyces chioneus</i>	White rot disease in wood plant	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
81	<i>Astraeus hygrometricus</i>	Liver/ anti-inflammatory	Moradali <i>et al.</i> (2007)

**Table 2:** List of mushrooms with disease symptoms, duration time and toxicity.

Toxicity	Genus/species	Symptoms	Time	Reference
Gastroenteritis	<i>Chlorophyllum Molybdites</i>	Nausea, vomiting	1-3 hours	Lehmann <i>et al.</i> (1992)
Disulfiram-like reactions	<i>Coprinus atramentarius</i>	Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Flushing, Hypotension.	Several hours	Michelot <i>et al.</i> (1992)
Psilocybin and hallucinations	<i>Psilocybe, Conocybe, Gymnopilus and Panaeolus</i>	Anxiety, visual and auditory hallucinations	30 min or 4-12 hours	Dinis-Oliveira <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Liver toxicity	<i>Galerina, Lepiota and Amanita</i>	Gastrointestinal effects	6-12 hours	Diaz <i>et al.</i> (2018)
Nephrotoxicity	<i>Cortinarius, Amanita smithiana</i>	Kidney disorders	1-2 weeks	Dinis-Oliveira <i>et al.</i> (2016)

**Table 3:** Diversity and distribution of poisonous mushrooms from Pakistan.

Botanical Name	Family	Collection area	Seasonality	Ecology	References
<i>Agaricus</i> sp.	Agaricaceae	Haripur	May-Apr	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Agaricus subrutilescens</i>	Agaricaceae	Haripur	Jun-Jul	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Agrocybe retigera</i>	Strophariaceae	Swabi	Feb-Oct	Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Amanita cinis</i>	Amanitaceae	Swabi	Jun-Oct	Dead Wood	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Amanita fulva</i>	Amanitaceae	AJK	Jul-Aug	On Conifers	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Amanita hemibapha</i>	Amanitaceae	AJK	Jun-Jul	Saprobic	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Amanitaceae	AJK	Jul-Aug	Grow with Pine	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Amanita nigra</i>	Amanitaceae	Swabi	Jun-Jul	Tree	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Amanita ovoidea</i>	Amanitaceae	Swabi	Aug-Oct	Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Amanita pallidorosea</i>	Amanitaceae	Salarzai	Jul-Aug	On tree	Khalid (2022)



<i>Amanita phalloides</i>	Amanitaceae	AJK	Jun-Jul	On Oaks tree	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Amanita virosa</i>	Amanitaceae	Punjab	Aug-Oct	Oak hardwoods	Ali <i>et al.</i> (2014)
<i>Bolbitius titubans</i>	Bolbitiaceae	Swabi	June-Oct	Dung	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Calostoma insignis</i>	Calostomataceae	Gandaw	Jul-Sep	On Soil	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Cantharellus floccus</i>	Gomphaceae	Haripur	Oct-Dec	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Chlorophyllum hortense</i>	Agaricaceae	Punjab	Jun-Jul	Grassy lawns	Jabeen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Chlorophyllum molybdites</i>	Agaricaceae	Swabi	Jul-Aug	Soil	Khalid (2022)
<i>Clitocybe fragrans</i>	Tricholomataceae	Islamabad	Aug-Sep	Saprophytic	Khalid (2022)
<i>Coprinellus micaceus</i>	Psathyrellaceae	Swabi	Dec-Mar	Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Coprinopsis picacea</i>	Psathyrellaceae	Bajaur	Oct-Nov	Saprophytic	Zeb <i>et al.</i> (2023)
<i>Coprinopsis variegata</i>	Psathyrellaceae	Bajaur	Jun-Jul	Saprophytic	Zeb <i>et al.</i> (2023)
<i>Coprinus coffeicola</i>	Amanitaceae	AKJK	Mar-Apr	Saprobic	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Coprinus comatus</i>	Agaricaceae	Swabi	Mar-Aug	Dung	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Coprinus xerophilus</i>	Agaricaceae	Swabi	Jan-Dec	Dung	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Crepidotus iqbalii</i>	Crepidotaceae	Swabi	Mar-Apr	Dung	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Cyclocybe parasitica</i>	Strophariaceae	Shukrata	Jun-Jul	On trees	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>	Polyporaceae	Pakistan	Jun-Jul	On Oaks	Lee <i>et al.</i> (2005)
<i>Fomitopsis pinicola</i>	Fomitopsidaceae	Swabi	March	Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Ganoderma lucidum</i>	Ganodermataceae	AJK	Aug-Oct	On the ground	Gardezi <i>et al.</i> (2003)
<i>Geastrum triplex</i>	Geastraceae	AJK	Mar-Jun	Quercus trees	Hussain <i>et al.</i> (2018)
<i>Ganoderma adpersum</i>	Ganodermataceae	AJK	Jun-Jul	On the ground	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Ganoderma applanatum</i>	Ganodermataceae	Swabi	Apr-Aug	Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Geastrum saccatum</i>	Geastraceae	Pakistan	Aug-Sep	Quercus trees	Isildak <i>et al.</i> (2004)
<i>Gyromitra esculenta</i>	Discinaceae	N.W.F.P	Apr-May	On sandy soil	Lagrange <i>et al.</i> (2020)
<i>Helvella elastica</i>	Loranthaceae	AJK	Jun-Jul	On wood	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Hygrocybe miniata</i>	Hygrophoraceae	Haripur	Sep- Nov	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Inocybe pallida</i>	Inocybaceae	Swabi	Mar-Apr	On sandy Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Lactarius helvus</i>	Xanthomonadaceae	Gilgit	May- Jun	On conifers	Razaq <i>et al.</i> (2012)
<i>Lepiota magnispora</i>	Agaricaceae	Neelum	Jan-Sep	Saprobic	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Lactarius torminosus</i>	Russulaceae	AJK	Apr-Aug	On Oaks tree	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Lactarius pubescens</i>	Polyporaceae	Bajaur	Jun-Oct	Parasitic	Zeb <i>et al.</i> (2023)

<i>Lactifusus piperatus</i>	Russulaceae	AJK	Mar-Oct	On oak tree	Hussain <i>et al.</i> (2018)
<i>Lentinula edodes</i>	Marasmiaceae	Haripur	Jun-Jul	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Lepiota brunneoincarnata</i>	Agaricaceae	Swabi	Jul-Nov	On soil /Dung	Varvenne <i>et al.</i> (2015)
<i>Lepiota cristata</i>	Agaricaceae	Khar	Jul-Oct	Shady areas	Khalid (2022)
<i>Lepiota flavoaurantiaca</i>	Agaricaceae	Swabi	Jun-Jul	Dead Wood	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Lepiota oreadiformis</i>	Agaricaceae	Swabi	Jul-Dec	Dung	Bresinsky <i>et al.</i> (2004)
<i>Leucoagaricus nivalis</i>	Agaricaceae	Kausar	Jun-Jul	On soil	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Leucopaxillus giganteus</i>	Tricholomataceae	Miandam	Jun-Jul	On oaks	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Marasmius acerinus</i>	Marasmiaceae	AJK	Jan-Mar	On grasses	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Marasmius rotula</i>	Marasmiaceae.	AJK	Jun-Jul	On deadwood	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Marasmius strictipes</i>	Marasmiaceae	AJK	Aug-Dec	On deadwood	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Marasmiellus</i> sp.	Marasmiaceae	Haripur	Feb-Mar	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Marasmius abruptipes</i>	Marasmiaceae	AJK	Mar-Apr	On humus soil	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Panaeolus foeniseccii</i>	Bolbitiaceae	Punjab	Jun-Jul	Grassy areas	Asif <i>et al.</i> (2023)
<i>Panaeolus subbalteatus</i>	Psathyrellaceae	Swabi	Feb-Nov	Dung	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Panellus mitis</i>	Mycenaceae	Swabi	Jun-Jul	Dead Wood	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Phallus</i> sp.	Phallaceae	Punjab	Mar-Aug	Wood	Moreno <i>et al.</i> (2023)
<i>Pholiota brunnescens</i>	Strophariaceae	AJK	Apr-Aug	On wood	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Pleurotus djamor</i> var. <i>djamor</i>	Pleurotaceae	Haripur	Jun-Aug	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Pleurotus giganteus</i>	Pleurotaceae	Haripur	Feb-Mar	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Pleurotus ostreatus</i>	Pleurotaceae	Haripur	Apr-Oct	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Pleurotus tuber regium</i>	Pleurotaceae	Haripur	Mar-Apr	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Polyporus alveolaris</i>	Polyporaceae	Swabi	May–Nov	Dead wood	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Russula collina</i>	Russulaceae	AJK	Jan-Apr	On conifers	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Russula fragrantissima</i>	Russulaceae	AJK	Jun-Oct	On hardwood	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Russula tenuiceps</i>	Rhinesuchidae	AJK	Jan-Aug	On oaks	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Russula cinereovinosa</i>	Russulaceae	AJK	Jan-Feb	Mycorrhizal	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Rhodocollybia butyracea</i>	Marasmiaceae	AJK	May-Oct	Saprobic	Ullah <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Russula sanguinaria</i>	Russulaceae	Salarzai	Jun–Oct	On sandy soils	Khalid (2022)
<i>Russula umbra</i>	Russulaceae	Swabi	Jan-Dec	Tree	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Schizophyllum commune</i>	Schizophyllaceae	Gandaw	Mar-Jul	On wood	Khalid (2022)
<i>Scleroderma bovista</i>	Sclerodermataceae	Kaghan	Feb-Mar	Saprobic	Ruán <i>et al.</i> (2006)

<i>Spongipellis pachyodon</i>	Polyporaceae	Swabi	Oct	Dead Wood	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Trametes gibbosa</i>	Polyporaceae	Swabi	Jan-Aug	Soil	Yaseen <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Polyporaceae	Salarzai	Jan–Dec	On oaks	Khalid (2022)
<i>Tremella fuciformis</i>	Tremellaceae	Haripur	Feb-Aug	Shady area	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Tyromyces chioneus</i>	Polyporaceae	Khairabad	Apr-Aug	On wood	Khalid (2022)
<i>Volvarella volvacea</i>	Pluteaceae	Haripur	Apr-Jun	Deadwood	Bibi <i>et al.</i> (2019)
<i>Xylaria polymorpha</i>	Xylariaceae	Dag Qala	Dec-Jan	On woody	Khalid (2022)
<i>Astraeus hygrometricus</i>	Diplocystaceae	Pakistan	Mar-Apr	On pine trees	Yasin <i>et al.</i> (2019), Roody (2003)

**Table 4:** Family-wise distribution of recorded species of mushroom in Pakistan.

Family	No. of species	Family	No. of species
Agaricaceae	12	Pluteaceae	1
Amanitaceae	10	Ganodermataceae	3
Marasmiaceae	7	Bolbitiaceae	2
Polyporaceae	7	Calostomataceae	1
Pleurotaceae	4	Xylariaceae	1
Strophariaceae	3	Russulaceae	7
Inocybaceae	1	Xanthomonadaceae	1
Hygrophoraceae	1	Schizophyllaceae	1
Geastraceae	2	Tremellaceae	1
Loranthaceae	1	Discinaceae	1
Psathyrellaceae	4	Tricholomataceae	2
Mycenaceae	1	Rhinesuchidae	1
Phallaceae	1	Sclerodermataceae	1
Crepidotaceae	1	Fomitopsidaceae	1
Gomphaceae	1		

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