

Fly Agaric Encyclopedia Article

Fly Agaric

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Fly Agaric

A poisonous mushroom of Eurasia (*Amanita muscaria*), having typically a bright red cap with white dots. A preparation, consisting primarily of the dried mushroom, is ingested by the people of Siberia as a HALLUCINOGEN. Intoxication by ingestion of several mushrooms moistened with milk or fruit juice leads to a progression of symptoms—beginning with tremors, continuing through a period of visual hallucination that may be interpreted as having religious significance, and finally ending in deep sleep. A similar preparation may be identified with the deified intoxicant *soma* of the ancient Hindus. In some cultures, the urine of intoxicated individuals is ingested by others to induce intoxication, since the active components of the preparation pass unmetabolized through the body.

Figure 1 *Fly Agaric*

The active components found in fly agaric are ibotenic acid and several of its metabolites. The predominant metabolite is muscimol, which has agonist properties at a subset of receptors recognizing the NEUROTRANSMITTER GABA. Ibotenic acid itself has agonist properties at certain excitatory amino acid receptors and has been shown to be neurotoxic.

See Also

Plants, Drugs From)

Bibliography

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